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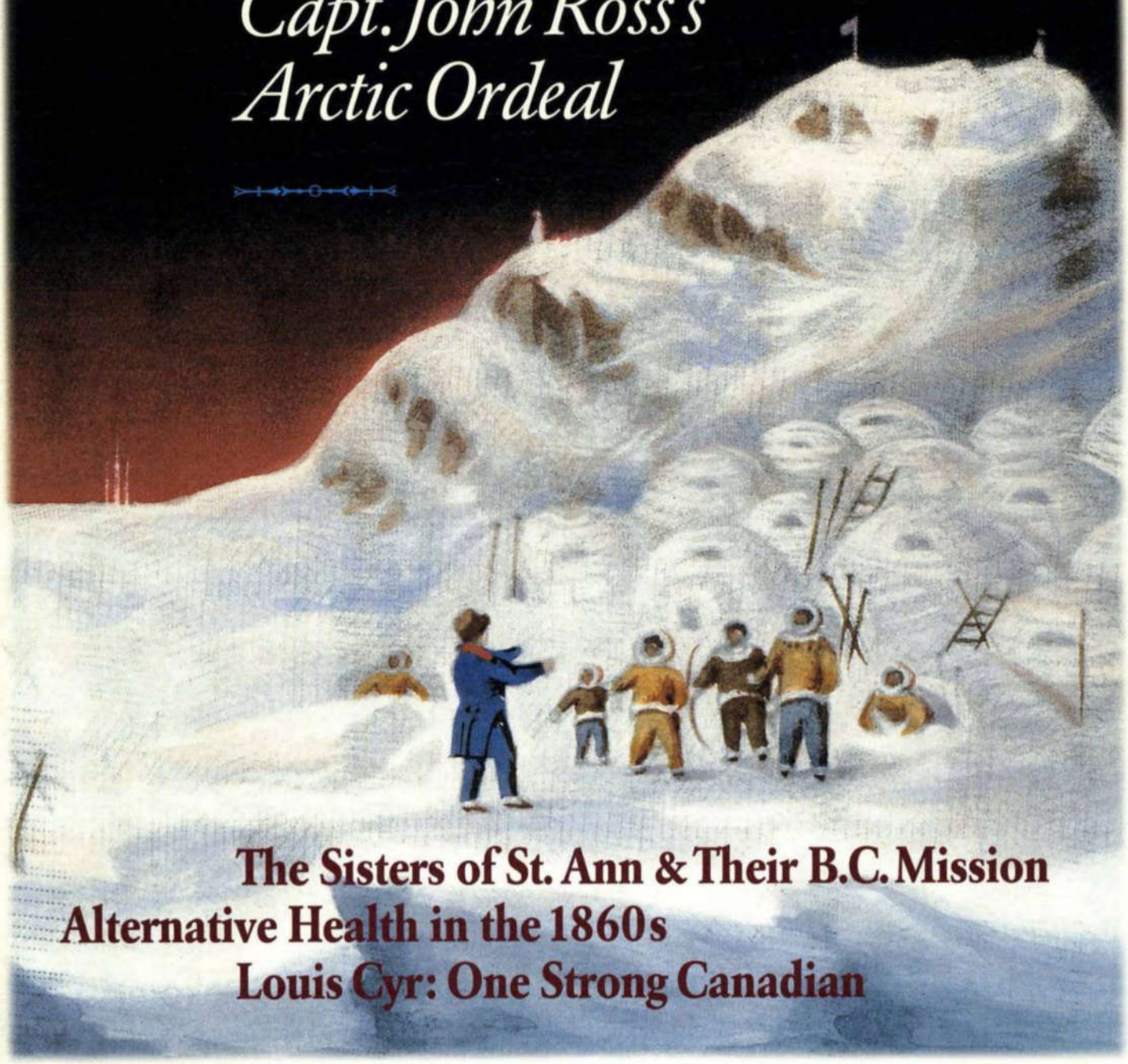

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ON THE COVER: Detail, "Snow Cottages of the Boothians," colour lithograph of the watercolour drawing by Captain John Ross. From *The Beaver* Special Collection.

Brian Anthony

Parks Canada Stands Alone

Throughout the years, Parks Canada – the parks service of the federal government – has been moved from one department to another, with no real status of its own. Like an orphan child, it has had to endure the vicissitudes of its foster-home department of the moment. This has ranged – apart from a few exceptional and welcome moments of positive attention – from benign neglect to indifference. All of that, however, is about to change: Bill C-29, a recent piece of federal legislation, will confer upon the parks service special operating agency status, making it a stand-alone federal agency freed from the constraints imposed by being housed in a government department.

With origins dating back to the latter part of the last century, the parks program was established in 1911 as the Dominion Parks Service, making it the longest-standing national parks program in the world. While its profile and status within the federal government have been modest, Parks Canada has enjoyed a high degree of recognition and support from the general public. Best known for the 38 national parks it administers as part of its mandate, Parks Canada also operates and interprets some 131 historic sites. Through the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, long affiliated with Parks Canada, more than 700 historic sites have been designated, and – with the exception of those within the ambit of Parks Canada – are owned and operated by the various levels of government, the private sector, or individual Canadians.

In recent years, Parks Canada – as the service has been well and widely known for the last quarter century or so – has migrated first from the departments of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to Environment Canada and, finally, to the relatively new cultural conglomerate known as Canadian Heritage. A number of factors – good, bad, and indifferent – finally contributed to the decision to free Parks Canada from departmental control: the pressures of federal expenditure reductions and other downsizing pressures; rethinking government's purposes and most suitable structures; the Rubikean task of creating, *e pluribus unum*, the new Department of Canadian Heritage out of many diverse and not necessarily compatible elements – mimicking a model created and quickly rejected by Great Britain; and, finally, that rare commodity known as common sense. Accordingly, in the federal budget of March 1996, it was announced that a Parks Canada agency would be established, and that it would "provide better services to Canadians and visitors through simplified human resource and administrative rules and more flexible financial authorities." The financial changes included the welcome provisions for revenue retention and rollover, which allows the agency to keep any revenues and year-end surpluses that, under the former system, would revert to federal coffers.

A ministerial round table, featuring a meeting between the Honourable Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage, and various stakeholder organizations – including the Canadian Nature Federation, The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, the World Wildlife Fund, and The Sierra Club of Canada – immediately followed the announcement. Further consultative meetings followed throughout the year in the national capital region and across Canada. However, this considerable amount of activity soon lost steam, and produced little in the way of results. As 1996 turned into 1997, interested parties were, justifiably, wondering what had become of this initiative.

Then, in the wake of the June 1997 federal elections, a new cabinet was formed and a new cabinet post created – Secretary of State (Parks), responsible to the Minister of Canadian Heritage. The Honourable Andy Mitchell, newly elected M.P. for Parry Sound-Muskoka, was named to the post. Known as something of a dragon slayer (he had defeated the pundits' choice, retired General Lewis Mackenzie, in the June election), Mitchell – a Montrealer by origin, a banker by profession, and a long-active member of the Parry Sound-Muskoka community – quickly rekindled the dying Parks Canada fire. In less than a month of his swearing-in ceremony, Mitchell organized a second round of national consultations, begin-

Secretary of State Andy Mitchell, at head of table, in consultation with stakeholders over the new Parks Canada mandate.

ning with a July 1997 meeting in Hull.

The consultative pace was refreshingly brisk. By autumn, drafting instructions were in the hands of the Department of Justice lawyers whose task it was to fashion the legislation giving the Parks Canada service distinct agency status. By early 1998, the drafting was complete, and on February 5, Minister Mitchell tabled the Parks Canada legislation – known as Bill C-29 – in the House of Commons. When not in the House, Mitchell spent much of that day calling representatives of key stakeholder organizations, briefing them personally on the bill, and answering any questions they raised. Following tabling and first reading, Bill C-29 was referred to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage for consideration and report.

This important program has, at least, been given the powers and the flexibility to carry out its vital mandate.

The committee reviewed the bill and heard testimony from interested parties. As a result of the hearings process, the committee made several amendments to the draft legislation, most of which related to matters such as human resources and official languages. But the most telling change was to the title: originally called the Canadian Parks Agency, Bill C-29 was modified to the Parks Canada Agency.

To understand the significance of this name change, it helps to understand the background of the various stakeholders directly affected by Parks legislation. The two most prominent voices are from those concerned with environmental and conservation issues, and those with an interest in cultural heritage and historic sites. Throughout the two consultative rounds that led to the drafting of the legislation, and during the hearings undertaken by the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to which the bill was referred, most of the emphasis was on the the natural or environmental component of the Parks Canada mandate. Those with an interest in the historic and cultural aspects were concerned that natural and environmental issues might predominate. The wording of the revised legislation gives considerable comfort in this regard, referring to the commemorative integrity of historic sites and to the protection of heritage railway stations and federal heritage buildings, for example. However, the initial draft title – Canadian Parks Agency – suggested a bias towards parks rather than historic sites, and during the hearings it was recommended – by Professor Richard Alway, Chair of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, among others – that the long title of the new agency be amended to the Canadian Parks and Historic Sites Agency, to reflect the dual mandate of the service. It was generally acknowledged, however, that whatever the bill and resultant organization might be titled, the Canadian public would go on calling it Parks Canada, and the acceptable compromise, Parks Canada Agency, was struck by the standing committee.

Other concerns emerged during the various consultative stages. Those with an interest in cultural heritage matters wanted to know the fate of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office, and other programs long associated with Parks Canada, such as those concerned with archaeology and heritage railway stations. Are they to leave the department and join the new agency? If so, will they enjoy equal or, preferably, greater protective powers? And if these functions *do* go to the new agency, how do they relate to the other heritage policy and program responsibilities of the Department of Canadian Heritage? The answers to these questions will be determined in the real world of practical, day-to-day experience.

Some – particularly those with an interest in natural heritage – expressed concern over governance. The new Parks Canada Agency will have a head who will report to the minister, but will have neither a governing board – as most federal agencies do – nor an advisory board. Instead, there will be a biannual review process involving stakeholders. This is a novel and radical departure from the traditional accountability and governance mechanisms of federal agencies, particularly those in the cultural sector. Whether or not this approach will be an improvement remains to be seen.

Clearly, the new Parks Canada Agency will be closely monitored by both parks and historic sites elements to see if it functions as intended. In the meantime, this important program of the federal government has, at least, been given appropriate recognition, its own independent status, and the powers and the flexibility to carry out its vital mandate unfettered by departmental constraints. Secretary of State Mitchell has in record time rescued Parks Canada from its status as an adjunct program of the Department of Canadian Heritage and given it the opportunity to stand on its own, under new and better terms. Now all it needs is the chance to demonstrate that what appears good in theory will be good in practice. ◆

Editor's note: At the time of publication, Bill C-29 had passed second reading by the Senate. It is expected to be passed as law by the fall of 1998.

Brian Anthony, the executive director of the Heritage Canada Foundation, has had a long and distinguished career in the cultural sector. Heritage Canada was created 25 years ago to promote the preservation of the built heritage of Canada.

Those wishing further information about Bill C-29 and the new Parks Canada Agency can contact:

Office of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Jacques Lefebvre, Senior Communications Advisor, (819) 997-7788

Office of the Secretary of State (Parks), Margot Doey-Vick, Communications Assistant, (819) 953-1686

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage Website: <http://interparl.parl.gc.ca/36/1/parlbus/commbus/house/CommitteeMain.asp?Language=E&CommitteeID=5>

Heritage Canada Telephone: (613) 237-1066, fax: (613) 237-5987, e-mail: <hercanot@sympatico.ca>

"THE BLESSED REGIONS OF BOOTHIA FELIX"

The Arctic Ordeal of Captain John Ross

by Stephen Bown

IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, the Canadian Arctic archipelago was one of the last unexplored waterways of the world. Apart from the overland expeditions by Alexander Mackenzie and Samuel Hearne to the Arctic coast, the entire region was a vast, unforgiving, uncharted wilderness – a true *terra incognita* in a world of diminishing geographical mysteries.

It was with the objective of revealing some of these remaining mysteries that the 52-year-old Captain John Ross organized a private expedition to the Arctic in 1829. He hoped to succeed, where countless others had failed, in discovering the great geographical prize of the nineteenth century: the final link in the Northwest Passage. With fantastic expectations, Ross, his nephew James Clark Ross, and 22 British mariners departed England in a single ship for a two-year expedition. They were destined, however, to spend the next four-and-a-half years languishing in ice-locked tedium in the Gulf of Boothia – a feat, however disastrous and unplanned it was, not matched until the twentieth century.

Illustrated: "Shulanina, Tulluachiu, Tirikshiu," Ross's depiction of three "Boothians", from *The Beaver* Special Collection

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-119412

"Natives of Prince Regents Bay"

In preparation for his expedition, Ross began experimenting with steam power. He was convinced that this new technology would revolutionize Arctic exploration and in 1828 published his theories in "A Treatise for Navigation by Steam." Not only would the engines free navigators from the whimsy of the wind, but, he speculated, the shallow draft of steam vessels would allow them to easily plow through the pack ice that hindered the progress of sail-powered vessels. The British Navy, however, was less than enthusiastic about his ideas and refused his request for funding. To pay for his pioneering scheme, Ross called on his "old and liberal friend" Felix Booth, the wealthy distiller of Booth's gin. Together they raised more than £20,000, and Ross began planning his departure for the spring of 1829.

Steam-powered ships regularly plied the inshore waters around the British Isles, but the new technology had never been tried on an expedition to the geographical hinterland or in an extreme climate. Nevertheless, Ross selected a small side-wheel steamer for his expedition and optimistically named it the *Victory*. Adapting and reinforcing the vessel for the Arctic, however, was a far more time-consuming task than he had imagined. To meet his spring sailing deadline, Ross aborted his plans for testing the *Victory*'s engine, a decision he was later to regret.

During the Atlantic crossing, the crude, clanking, and ill-fitted engine, with leaky boilers and defective valves, developed serious problems – problems the mariners were powerless to repair. By the time they reached Lancaster Sound, the engine, a rumbling mass of rusting iron that produced so little power it was better left unstoked, was more a liability than an asset. The *Victory* was running on

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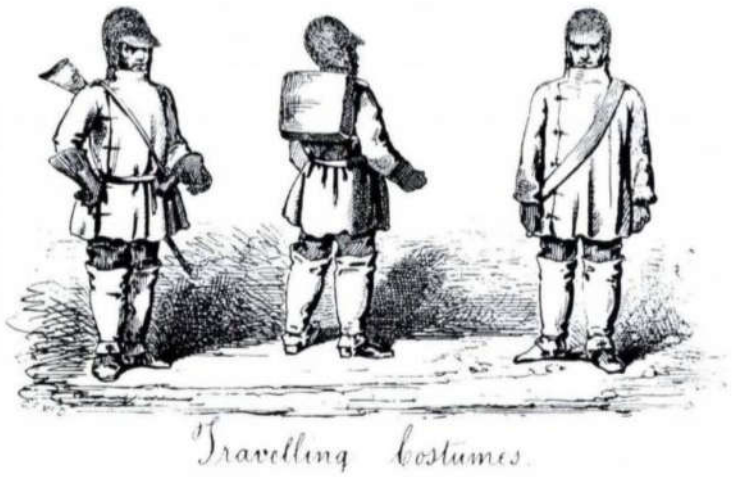
Unless otherwise noted, all images in this article are from original colour lithographs based on the watercolour drawings of Captain John Ross. These and quoted extracts in the article are from the book by John Ross entitled *Narrative of a Second Voyage in Search of a North-West Passage, and of a Residence in the Arctic Regions During the Years 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832, 1833* (London: A.W. Webster, 1835).

CATHY CHAPIN / LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY GEOGRAPHY DEPT.

"Boothia Felix" and regions



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-28269

This illustration, which appeared in an 1853 issue of the Illustrated Arctic News, *shows the winter wear of the British Navy in the Arctic.*

sail alone. Ross bitterly remarked that "whatever my former fears or suspicions might have been, the defects of the machinery, now that we were fairly embarked on our voyage, began to weigh very seriously on my mind." Cursing the "execrable machinery," Ross had the rusting refuse dismantled and deposited on the lonely shores of Fury Beach.

Partly owing to the size of the steam engine (with fuel it occupied over two-thirds of the hold), Ross had only provisioned the *Victory* for a brief sojourn in the Arctic. He was gambling on claiming a cache of supplies left by William Parry on Somerset Island. In 1824, Parry's ship *Fury* was crushed by pack ice and ground apart on Fury Beach. Fortunately for Ross and his crew, Parry's treasure trove of canned consumables was untouched by the ravages of beasts or nature. "I need not say," remarked Ross, "that it was an occurrence not less novel than interesting, to find in this abandoned region of solitude and ice and rocks, a ready market where we could supply all our wants ... all ready to be shipped when we chose, and all free of cost." The Englishmen dutifully loaded the tins of meat, vegetables, flour, and sugar into the *Victory*'s hold. Yet, according to Ross, "all we could stow away seemed scarcely to diminish the piles of canisters."

Free of the offending engine, Ross eased the *Victory* south through the pack ice into what he named the Gulf of Boothia after his patron. For the remainder of the year, he fruitlessly searched for a westward-leading inlet. When the water began to freeze near the end of September, the Englishmen hastily prepared for winter harbour in Lord Mayor Bay on the east coast of the Boothia Peninsula. Supplies were abundant, spirits were high, and, much to the pleasure and enlightenment of the ice-locked mariners, a band of Inuit made their winter village nearby. During this first winter, the land of ice and snow was an exciting novelty; it was a land of mystery and exotic splendour. Exhilarated by his surroundings, Ross reported that he experienced "beauty, horror, danger, everything that could excite; they would have excited a poet even to the verge of madness."

Whether or not Ross was a poet can only be surmised, but for the armchair voyager he attempted to portray the magnificent spectacle of Arctic ice floes, the sublime beauty of the crystalline ice formations, the wonder of the expansive, perpetual twilight, the ferocious lashing of the Arctic gales, and the daunting glory of the spinning bergs of polar blue. "In a winter's storm," Ross mused, "the term ice ... conveys no idea of what it is the fate of an arctic navigator to witness and to feel. ... let them imagine, if they

can, these mountains of crystal hurled through a narrow strait by a rapid tide; meeting, as mountains in motion would meet, with the noise of thunder, breaking from each other's precipices huge fragments, or rending each other asunder till, losing their former equilibrium, they fall over headlong, lifting the sea around them in breakers, and whirling it in eddies."

Ross was overcome by the harsh beauty of the polar world. "Who more than I has admired the glaciers of the extreme north," he wondered. "Who more has loved to contemplate the icebergs sailing from the Pole before the tide and the gale, floating along the ocean, through calm and through storm, like castles and towers and mountains, gorgeous in colouring, and magnificent, if often capricious, in form; and have I too not sought amid the crashing and splitting and the thundering roarings of a sea of moving mountains, for the sublime, and felt that nature could do no more?" Eventually, he found that nature could indeed do more–more of the same. Exciting as it initially was, after nine months ice-locked in Lord Mayor Bay, Ross became a little jaded with his frozen wonderland.

As winter lingered well into what he usually called spring, Ross felt compelled to inform his readers, perhaps for balance, that "amid all its brilliancy, this land, the land of ice and snow, has ever been, and ever will be a dull, dreary, heart-sinking, monotonous waste, under the influence of which the very mind is paralyzed, ceasing to care or think." Ross, however, appears to have spent a great deal of time thinking, mostly about "matters of philosophical speculation." He pondered the nature of life in the north, he marvelled again at the polar landscape, and he tried to understand Inuit peoples, who both amazed and appalled him.

His opinions of the Inuit were as mixed and fickle as his view of the landscape. At first they were "gormandizing savages," gluttonously devouring their food in a primitive frenzy. "The Esquimaux is an animal of prey," Ross suggested, "with no other enjoyment than eating; and guided by no principal and no reason." Still, he was honest enough to admit during his second winter in 1830, if grudgingly, that "we could now easily see that their appearance was very superior to our own." He noted that the "Boothians," as he named them, were well fed, well clothed and rarely suffered from scurvy or other maladies resulting from poor diet.

The Boothians' comparative good health was not lost on Ross. Unlike his fellow Arctic naval officers, he suspected that adopting Inuit customs would greatly improve conditions for his crew. "It would be very desirable," he noted, "if the men could acquire the taste for Greenland food; since all experience has shown that the use of oil and fat meats is the true secret of life in these frozen countries." In imitation of the Boothians, Ross forced his sometimes unwilling mariners to consume fox meat, arctic salmon, and seal blubber that he purchased from the hunters. He also insisted his mariners barter for Inuit fur clothing,

"Commander J.C. Ross Killing a Musk Bull"

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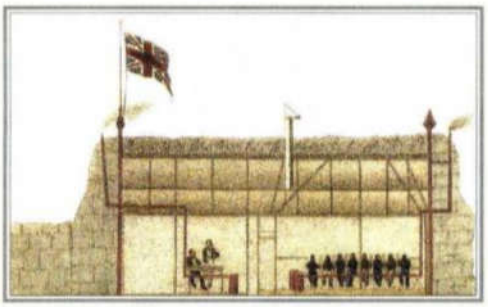
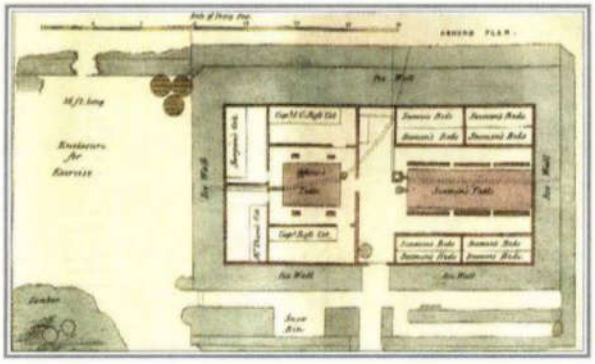
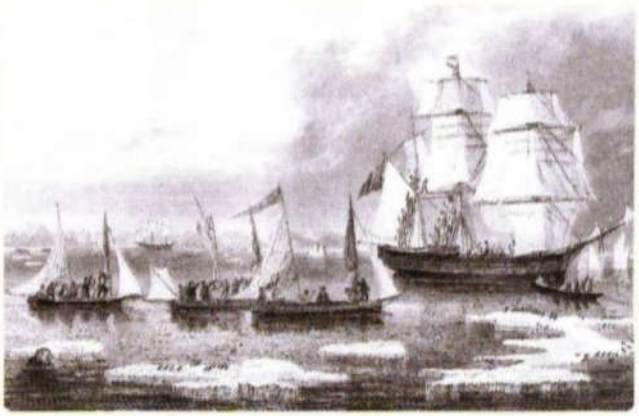
"Snow Cottages of the Boothians"





Somerset House



"The Victory*'s Crew Saved by the* Isabella*"*

ALL ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE BEAVER SPECIAL COLLECTION

far superior to the standard wool sailors' outfits of the Royal Navy. Ross eventually became convinced that there was "little doubt, indeed, that many of the unhappy men who have perished from wintering in these climates ... might have been saved if they had ... conformed, as is so generally prudent, to the usages and the experience of the natives."

Ross also noted that the Boothians were loathe to consume alcohol, and correspondingly persuaded his sailors to cut down on the Booth's gin–a point of contention that only some of the men grudgingly accepted. "It is difficult to persuade men," he complained, that "even though they should not be habitual drinkers of spirits, that the use of these liquors is debilitating instead of the reverse." It was standard naval practice, however, to provide a daily dosage of strong liquor to mariners. Despite Ross's admonishments, the Booth's gin, so plentiful at the beginning of the expedition, was completely depleted by the journey's end. Strange it is that a huge peninsula and bay in the Canadian Arctic were named by a temperate sea captain in honour of one of London's largest gin distillers.

But it was not the elder Ross's poetic musings, philosophical speculation, or his choice to adopt Inuit customs and clothing (a decision more than any other that ensured the survival of many of his crew) that earned the triumphant laurels of fame and recognition in England–it was the charting of the coastline and the discovery of the North Magnetic Pole by his nephew, James Clark Ross. While John Ross was a traveller, a gentleman, and an observer, James was the model Victorian adventurer, avidly striving for both scientific precision and the admiration of his peers. John was a manager and a leader; James was an explorer. While John organized short jaunts to nearby native villages to purchase fresh meat and fish, or pondered the merits of Inuit customs, James led extensive overland sledge forays, venturing for weeks at a time along the uncharted coastline north and west from the ice-locked ship.

On one of these expeditions in late May 1831, the younger Ross secured the enduring respect of both the British Navy and the Royal Geographical Society. Noticing peculiar fluctuations of his compass needle while exploring north along the west coast of the Boothia Peninsula, he suspected he was near the North Magnetic Pole. He immediately set out to record the exact location, which, sadly, was an unremarkable patch of frozen earth. The younger Ross was not impressed. "It was scarcely censurable to regret," he lamented, "that there was not a mountain to indicate a spot to which so much of interest must be attached ... had it been a pyramid as large as that of Cheops, I am not quite sure it would have done more than satisfy our ambition." Nevertheless, he erected a pyramid of stones to mark the spot. Ironically, the North Magnetic Pole is constantly on the move and today lies over 300 kilometres from where Ross first recorded it; Ross's cairn, however, likely remains where he constructed it.

On another expedition, James led his overland sledge crew west from the Boothia Peninsula. He crossed the ice to Cape Felix, what he believed was the northernmost point of the mainland, which he named King William Land. Because he was running low on provisions, he decided not to follow the coastline south and east to chart the southern coast of what he named Poctes's Bay. Poctes's Bay was actually Rae Strait, and King William Land is now known as King William Island. Rae Strait is a true Northwest Passage. Had James Clark Ross taken the time to properly explore and chart this coastline, he may have saved the lives of dozens of mariners on the Franklin expedition 15 years later. (When faced with the dilemma of choosing between the narrow Rae Strait to the east of King William Island, which he thought was an inlet partly because of Ross's charts, or the more promising Larsen Sound to the west, Franklin guessed wrong. His ships were driven aground on the north shore of King William Island by tons of grinding pack ice funnelled south through McClintock Channel.)

Because continued exploration or departure was impossible in the spring, the entire crew anxiously awaited the summer thaw in August of 1831. After enduring two winters vised in the ice of Lord Mayor Bay, the desire to return home to England was strong. Though they had suffered little physical hardship, even the indomitable John Ross experienced a growing lassitude toward his polar home. "We were weary," Ross complained, "for want of occupation, for want of thought, and (why should I not say it?) for want of society. To-day was as yesterday, and as was to-day, so would be tomorrow." Boredom, unfortunately, was not the only problem. The canned provisions, so plentiful two years earlier, were almost all consumed. In August, when the ice finally cleared the Gulf of Boothia, Lord Mayor Bay was still frozen solid, with the *Victory* anchored in the middle. Ross ordered the crew to begin sawing ragged channels through the ice toward the Gulf, hoping to haul the ship to open water and sail to Lancaster Sound before the winter freeze.

But by late September the *Victory* remained solidly imprisoned in the ice, not more than 20 kilometres from where it had been. "To us," Ross wrote, "the sight of the ice was a plague, a vexation, a torment, an evil, a matter of despair." Faced with the sickening realization that the ship

would never be free from the ice, his musings turned melancholy:

> *These are the objections to a snow landscape, ... the gale is a gale of snow, the fog a fog of snow ... when the breath of the mouth is snow, when snow settles on the hair, the dress, the eyelashes, where snow falls around us and fills our chamber, our beds, our dishes ... where our sofas are of snow, and our houses of snow: when snow was our decks, snow was our awnings, snow our observatories, snow our larders, snow our salt; and when all the other uses of snow should at last be of no avail, our coffins and our graves were to be graves and coffins of snow.*

By the spring of 1832, Ross truly feared his grave of snow. The winter was long, harsh, and lonely, the Boothians had moved on to other regions, and the food was almost gone. In late April, Ross abandoned the *Victory* to its icy tomb and prepared the crew for a desperate dash overland, north to Fury Beach, hoping to row the *Fury*'s small boats to Lancaster Sound and catch a whaling ship before the season ended. It was a gruelling five-week trek, 450 kilometres across the ice-encrusted, wind-lashed polar barrens. At one point Ross had to order the mutinous and demoralized mariners forward at gunpoint. In July they staggered onto Fury Beach, loaded the ship's boats, and rowed toward Lancaster Sound – only to discover the waterway plugged with a turbulent mire of pack ice. Ross and his wretched crew returned despondently to Fury Beach, where they hastily constructed a makeshift winter cabin from old ship's planking and canvas and prepared for another nine-month winter. Ross named the shabby dwelling Somerset House, perhaps remembering better days.

The fourth winter was a dreadful nightmare. Without the shelter of their ship, the Arctic wind pried at the walls of their hut and froze them to their mats when they slept; without the companionship of the Boothians, their spirits withered from fear and loneliness. By January 1833, Ross, in the early stages of scurvy, brooded about his death while blood oozed from his old war wounds. The remaining lime juice had lost most of its antiscorbutic properties, and the only game was the occasional arctic fox. Without much fresh game or vegetation, the sailors were hostages in a polar world that was slowly sucking the life from them. In mid-February, the ship's carpenter succumbed to the dreaded scurvy and was buried in a mound of ice. Ross scrawled in his journal that "the hopeful did not hope more, and the despondent continued to despair."

Spring, however, brought a respite from the Arctic's assault, and perhaps a rejuvenation of Ross's hope. With fresh game and warmer weather, they were able to allay the agonizing debilitation of scurvy, and Ross began preparing for a final foray to freedom. In July 1833, when the ice had finally cleared enough to let them pass, they loaded the small boats and laid a course for Lancaster Sound. After a few days, the ragged party sighted a sail on the horizon and rowed to freedom. They were rescued by Baffin Bay whalers hunting their quarry at the entrance to Lancaster Sound. Astonished as they were to encounter three boatloads of human flotsam in the frigid waters of the Arctic, the whalers immediately brought them aboard, fed them, clothed them, and prepared for a joyous return to England. It was a remarkable end to a long and peculiar story – a story of hardship, enlightenment, misery, perseverance, and ultimately, luck.

Ross, no longer "dressed in the rags of wild beasts," was a hero in London – survivor of a four-and-a-half-year tenure in the foreboding maze of the Arctic archipelago. Long thought dead, his resurrection seemed miraculous. For his services he was knighted, appointed a rear admiral in the Navy, and given a £5,000 parliamentary reward to share with his crew. He then wisely retired from Arctic service until 1850, when he led a small expedition to help locate the missing Franklin expedition. James Clark Ross continued his polar prowling in the Antarctic during the following years, where he earned everlasting fame for his scientific documentation of the southern continent.

Oddly, John Ross, a seemingly fearless leader who saw his crew safely through a disastrous predicament against all odds, and perhaps the most poetic of all Arctic explorers, was afraid that his journal was too plain or petty to capture the essence of his time under the polar yoke. He felt his writing inadequate to summarize the dull horror of his final two years – but, as always, he tried:

> *"Let him who reads to condemn what is so meagre, have some compassion on the writer who had nothing better than this meagreness, this repetition, this reiteration of the ever resembling, every day dullness to record, and what was infinitely worse, to endure. ... according to Persius, it is hunger which makes poets write as it makes parrots speak, but I suspect that neither poet nor parrot would have gained much in eloquence under a fox diet, and that an insufficient one, in the blessed regions of Boothia Felix."* ◆

Stephen R. Bown is a freelance writer currently living in Ottawa. Although he has always been interested in Arctic exploration, he has never been to the Gulf of Boothia, nor has he ever survived on a diet of arctic fox and Booth's gin.

Dreaming of Eden in the New Brunswick Bush

by Joanne Findon

Touting a vegetarian diet free of alcohol, salt, and caffeine, an obscure New Brunswick couple were determined to form a self-sufficient utopian colony of health reformers. But diet was only a small part of the system of alternative medicine that they so fervently believed in. A belief in exercise, proper dress, and the healing powers of pure water were central to "the water cure." A look at preventive medicine and non-traditional healing – as practised in the 1860s.

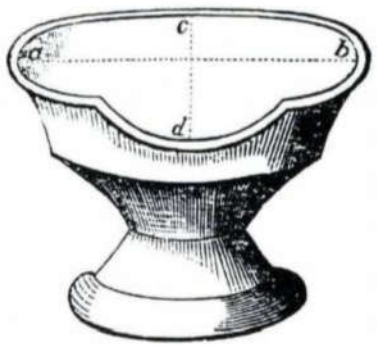
In 1864, two poor New Brunswick intellectuals, Joel Bonney Craig and his wife Sarah Jamieson Craig, launched their plan to organize a "colony of true, Christian dress and health reformers," a self-sufficient communal farm run along strict principles of "progressive health reform." In an article published in the January 1864 issue of *The Herald of Health*, a New York alternative-health magazine, Joel described their ideal community as a place

> *where we may "worship God in our bodies as well as our spirits," free from the frowns, persecutions, and evil influences of fashionable society; where those who wish to reform their habits of life, but have not strength and resistance sufficient to overcome the opposition of those by whom they are now surrounded, may find a home in which they can grow and enjoy the company and counsel of pure and congenial spirits; where profanity, licentiousness, and quarrelling shall not be tolerated, and where the manufacture, sale, and use of all alcoholic and drug medicines shall be forever prohibited (except perhaps in some rare surgical cases); where foul tobacco shall not be allowed in any form, and where innocent animals shall not be abused, killed, and devoured by human beings as in other places.*

He goes on to describe a community in which the sexes would be equal, with boys and girls educated together. Those interested in joining such a colony were urged to write to J.B. Craig, president of the Universal Progressive Reform Association, the local health reform club organized by the Craigs in 1861.

Sarah and Joel had been reading alternative-health magazines since before their marriage in 1860, and were particularly interested in the "water cure" or "hydropathy". This interest had much to do with a knee wound Joel received in his youth that healed badly due to improper cleansing. The injury had left him partly crippled and unable to do the types of heavy work that were necessary to make a decent living in the sparsely settled communities of Whittier's Ridge, Clarence Hill, and Rolling Dam north of St. Andrews, New Brunswick. As it was, his physical disability kept him and his family desperately poor. Fuelled by frustration at their poverty and by the fiery rhetoric of the American health-reform movement, the Craigs' interest in hydropathy had by the mid-1860s warmed to an evangelical fervour.

Hydropathy was an alternative medical system that enjoyed great popularity in the United States from the 1840s to the 1860s. Central to the hydropathic philosophy was the belief in the body's ability to heal itself, and advocates preached the efficacy of clean water, applied both



Above and on subsequent pages, the various water-cure processes as illustrated in a number of books on hydropathy published by Fowlers and Wells in the 1850s.

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JOANNE FINDON

Sarah Jamieson Craig's younger sister, Martha Jamieson, in her Reform dress.

The article at right, "American and French Fashions Contrasted," appeared in the October 1851 issue of The Water-Cure Journal. *The text states: "We also append ... anatomical views of a* natural *waist and an* artificial *or tight-laced waist corresponding with Numbers 1 and 2 of the larger figures. To us these views convey an unanswerable argument, and will need no further comment."*

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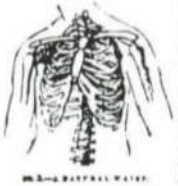
The American and French Fashions Contrasted

We herewith present our readers with engraved views of the prevailing European and [proposed] American Fashions.

No. 1 represents Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, of Seneca Falls, N. Y. It was engraved from a Daguerreotype for the Curtain, by an excellent newspaper publisher in Auburn, N. Y., and kindly loaned to us by Mr. Thurlow W. Brown, the gentlemanly proprietor.

No. 2 was [illegible] by our own Engraver, from the *Illustrated London News*, and is an exact copy of the original, without variation, and is a perfect representation of the Parisian Fashions, as worn in the fall last. We submit the two styles side by side, for the consideration of American Women.



We also append, as an accompaniment, the anatomical views of a natural waist and an artificial or tight laced waist, corresponding with Numbers 1 and 2 of the larger figures.

To us these views convey an unanswerable argument, and will need no further comment.

In future numbers we shall present other styles of the American Costume, with pertinent and appropriate descriptions accompanying them.

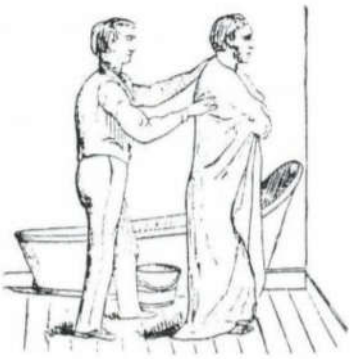
We should add in this connection, that the friends of Mrs. Bloomer do not regard the above as a good likeness of that lady; but as it conveys a general idea of the new costume, we consider it well adapted to our present purpose.

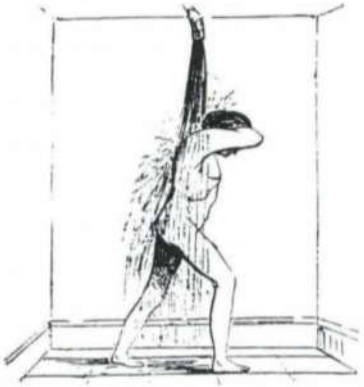
externally and internally, in curing diseases of all kinds. First popularized by the Austrian peasant Vincent Priessnitz in early nineteenth-century Graefenberg, the water-cure movement spread to the U.S. in the 1840s. Two of the founders of the American movement, Joel Shew and Russell Thatcher Trall, opened a water-cure house in New York in 1843 where they put Priessnitz's methods into practice. There they expanded their system's narrow focus on water as a healing agent to include the prevention of illness through proper diet, exercise, and dress (especially for women). Within a few years, the movement was advocating a whole range of lifestyle changes in the name of better health. The system's main publication, *The Water Cure Journal* (later renamed *The Herald of Health*), encouraged the practice of health reform at home, and by the 1850s had thousands of subscribers across North America.

Hydropathy flourished in reaction to the shortcomings of conventional nineteenth-century medical practitioners, most of whom relied on interventionist methods (such as bleeding and blistering) and alcohol-based drugs. Water-cure converts railed at the methods of the "drug doctors" who "poisoned" their patients with alcohol and calomel (a mercury chloride compound traditionally used as a purgative). They also raged against the fashionable corsets and long, heavy dresses that

Sarah Jamieson Craig, in her Reform dress, c. 1862.

JOANNE FINDON





were so damaging to women's health. As the movement gained popularity, the high-fat, high-salt, and high-sugar diet of many North Americans also became a target of hydropathists' wrath.

The claim that water could be used to treat all diseases seems preposterous today. Yet it was not until the late nineteenth century that the "germ theory" of disease became at all accepted in medical circles. Indeed, even by the 1840s, little real progress had been made since the Middle Ages in the understanding of disease and its transmission. Certainly, the hydropathic healers were working from a model of human physiology as limited as that recognized by regular doctors, but at least their emphasis on bathing and proper diet did no harm. In fact, it likely improved the general health of their patients, even in cases where it could not completely cure them.

Sarah and Joel were clearly unusual in their interest in alternative medicine, at least in the context of their remote neighbourhood north of St. Andrews. Yet both had long been regarded as eccentrics in the community. Sarah had been a dress reformer since 1857, when she made and wore her first "American Costume" (a knee-length, uncorseted dress worn over long pants) at the age of 17. She continued to wear this outfit even on her wedding day and claimed to have been ridiculed for it by many members of the community. This, coupled with her strident views on diet and medication, did little to endear her to her neighbours. As for Joel, his disability had marked him since adolescence as "different," and in an area where most men worked away from home for part of the year, lumbering or fishing or labouring in the shipyards, many regarded Joel's inability to work "away" as mere laziness. All of these factors contributed to the Craigs' feelings of dislocation from their community. Sarah's diaries and memoirs reveal an intense sense of isolation:

> *The people among whom we lived were mostly slow, ignorant, stolid; living in a rut; never thinking (or if told never believing) there was any other or better way to live. Many were intensely low-lived, vulgar, and profane. ... We had*

scarcely one *congenial spirit, with whom we could talk face to face.*

In the absence of all but a handful of sympathetic friends, Sarah and Joel found their "community" elsewhere, in the pages of American health-reform magazines. Despite their extreme poverty, they managed to subscribe to *The Herald of Health* and *The Laws of Life*, a journal published at the water-cure establishment Our Home on the Hillside in Dansville, New York – sometimes by selling subscriptions to these magazines themselves.

In 1862 Sarah's brother Albert came home to die from consumption, but was "cured" by the hydropathic treatment administered by Sarah and her mother. His miraculous recovery certainly impressed the community, but it did little to reconcile the people to Sarah and Joel's radical attitudes about diet (no salt, alcohol, tea, coffee, or meat) and their practice of hydropathy. Indeed, in a letter to *The Herald of Health* in August 1864, Sarah described her treatment of four patients and the hostile reactions of the community. In the case of one pregnant woman who collapsed on the road, Sarah wrote of her imposition of a strict diet of "fresh oatmeal gruel, apples, oranges, raisins, ... and Graham bread when she could take it" in the face of strong opposition from the woman's family. The "meat, fine bread, and draughts of gin" that her relatives advocated were apparently the types of foods deemed appropriate for the sick by the community, yet this was precisely the diet deplored by the health reform movement. Sarah commented triumphantly that "they only managed to give her salted gruel twice when we were not on hand." Nevertheless, this incident apparently provoked much anger among the woman's relatives and neighbours. Sarah's account may well be exaggerated, but it offers a glimpse of the community's reaction to her methods:

The most scandalous falsehoods about "starving," "freezing," "drowning," etc., were circulated for miles around. Her father came and "raised a breeze" about her food and treatment; but neither threats, persuasion, ridicule, nor the grossest misrepresentation could move us from our allegiance to the better way.

Whether or not the community was as hostile as she said, Sarah's *perception* of this hostility was clear. In such a context, the idea of a close community of kindred spirits, far from the derisive eyes of such ignorant neighbours, must have seemed akin to paradise.

The call for a "colony of reformers" in *The Herald of Health* brought a deluge of correspondence from eager health and dress reformers all across North America. Letters came from as far away as California. Sarah and Joel had to add secretarial duties to their daily struggle for survival. As Sarah wrote in her memoir:

All our spare time and much of our sleeping time was spent writing and answering letters. Forwarding and receiving our mail through Calais post office, we used the U.S. 3-cent stamps, which were freely furnished by our correspondents ... When our neighbours went to town they usually crossed the river and by them we sent our letters – often 12 to 16 at a time – and a line to the Postmaster would bring our mail back.

The amount of correspondence soon became burdensome; Sarah was answering letters with her month-old baby on her lap. To a large extent, each correspondent required the same basic information, written over and over again. A small printing press would, Sarah and Joel imagined, solve this problem by allowing them to print leaflets and perhaps even a "tiny periodical." They wrote to their correspondents, who immediately began sending small amounts of money for a press – from 25 cents to a dollar

each. Some of the type they acquired at no cost when raiders attacked the St. Croix *Herald* at night and threw the presses into the river, where Joel and Sarah's brother, Isaac, found them and salvaged the type early the next morning. When at last they had saved enough money to buy the press they wanted, disappointment set in. The press would print only the first page and part of the last. Nevertheless, in October 1864, they printed off the first and only number of their paper, *The Car of Progress,* and mailed it out.

Each of the prospective colonists had his or her own idea of which region would best meet the criteria for the colony's success as a self-sufficient community. In Joel's initial article, he had expressed the hope of being able to take advantage of the Homestead Law in the western U.S. This, however, proved impossible. Instead, land agents wrote only of properties for sale at prices well beyond those the correspondents could afford.

Sarah and Joel's project was only one of many utopian schemes planned and established in the nineteenth century. However, most of the others had either a charismatic personality or a rich benefactor (or both) behind them. Sarah and Joel were apparently naive enough to believe that, poor as they were, they could launch such a scheme on their own. They had received most of their education at home, but read widely and voraciously from an early age. They were so articulate in print that their correspondents could be forgiven for mistaking them for people of some education and resources. Such was not the case.

Indeed, in her memoirs Sarah described their "home affairs" as very grim during the time of their colony scheme. They tried to farm their land, but the neighbours' cows always managed to trample the crops because "one lame man" (Joel) could not keep the property properly fenced. She wrote:

> *Though we farmed all we could each season, we never could raise half a crop. Some falls we housed vegetables, beans and peas enough to last through winter and plant next spring, but often not. In spring how carefully we cut the potatoes to get all the eyes to plant, yet leave a piece for the pot!*

The Craigs' plans were always frustrated by a lack of resources. When they finally chose southeast Kansas as the best location for what they called "our Eden," low land prices in New Brunswick prevented them from joining their fellow reformers. Many of their correspondents had land that they could sell at a fair price, but Sarah and Joel's property was worth little. Sarah noted, "Our place ... would bring but a small price, if it sold at all. We could not go unless we sold." The Craigs continued their correspondence, urging the others to move ahead with the colony plan in the hope that they themselves would one day be able to join them.

A disastrous house fire on January 29, 1865, put a final end to their hopes of relocating. While Sarah and her sick baby were staying at her parents' home and Joel was out, the house caught fire and burned to the ground. Sarah's diary entry captures her desolation:

> *Not only our poor, barn-like house is gone, with our clothing, bedding, furniture, provisions... but our noble and valuable library of books, magazines and periodicals, – volumes of History, Biography, Travels, Science, literature, art etc., for which with our piles of manuscripts and correspondence, we would not have taken any money, and which no money can restore – all, all "swept to oblivion by one fell stroke of the relentless destroyer."*

Left destitute, Joel and Sarah were forced to focus all their attention on their own survival.

Sarah wrote to *The Herald of Health* to inform correspondents whose addresses had been lost in the fire. Her

brave rhetoric and apparent determination masked what must have been a desperate situation at home:

> *Our friends probably think we have grown lukewarm in the cause, and given up the "Colony" enterprise for want of means to carry it out. We wish to assure our friends that our zeal has not one whit abated, nor our determination grown weaker to seek and find a congenial home for ourselves, and all who can join hand, heart and soul with us – where we shall be wholly free from the trammels of society and fashionable life – free to live, and grow back into the arms of Mother Nature, and make our home an Eden! Though obstacles have seemed to thicken in our path, we confidently trust in God, firmly believing that He will aid all who earnestly labor for the establishment of His kingdom on earth.*

Responses began to arrive in the mail. Some would-be colonists sent small amounts of money for the relief of the family. Others who were able to sell their land moved to Kansas in the hope that their friends would follow. But Sarah lamented that even among those who went to Kansas, many "nearly always gravitated to where paying work could be had, to await further developments." Without the Craigs' enthusiastic leadership, the colony never cohered. As late as September 1866, Sarah and Joel were still trying to procure lands in Kansas, but with their failure to do so, the colony scheme finally collapsed.

A postscript to the utopian plan occurred a few months after Joel's death in 1886. Hearing of Sarah's widowhood and her need to find a new home for herself and her children, one of the old correspondents, James Allen, wrote to offer them a place in New Jersey. He and his wife were travelling and lecturing on health issues, and needed someone to farm their land for them. Sarah's enthusiasm is evident in her diary entry:

> *He wants his place taken care of while he is away; and he wants to get a number of progressive people together to form the nucleus of a co-operative or Communistic Home, somewhat on the plan suggested by my husband and me over twenty years ago. How delightful if the seed we two then planted should bear good fruit, and I and my children live to pluck it.*

This idealistic plan also failed. Upon arriving in New Jersey in January 1888, Sarah found that the Allen farm was too small and in no condition to support her and her children. Once again, poverty frustrated her plans. Mrs. Allen offered the family all they could raise on the property, but with no money to buy manure and seed, or to live on until the harvest, Sarah was forced to admit that the project was doomed.

A more cynical assessment of the New Jersey episode can be found in a letter from Sarah's brother Edwin to Sarah's youngest daughter Florence in 1935. Edwin had grown up during the first excitement of the colony scheme, and at the age of nine had helped Joel set the type in the printing press for *The Car of Progress*. Yet his outsider's eye allowed him to see the follies of the New Jersey venture more clearly than his determined sister ever could. He wrote to Florence: "Your mother was assured by the Allens and others that the whole family could *easily* earn a livelihood by picking fruit! What sort of fruit could be picked in winter was not specified."

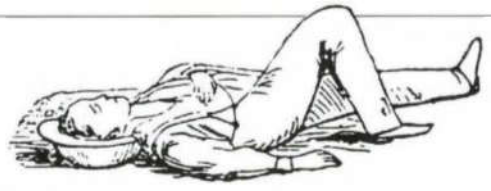
Edwin then pointed out that nearly all of the utopian schemes of the nineteenth century soon broke apart due to the "incompatibility" of their members. Here he pinpointed an issue that neither Sarah nor Joel seems ever to have considered. What if they *had* been able to sell their land and "plant their colony" in Kansas with this group of people whom they had never met? Could such a collection of diverse personalities ever have cohered as a community? If Sarah's dealings with the Allens in New Jersey afforded any hints, the likelihood of failure was enormous.

Nevertheless, Sarah Craig's own assessment of the colony project, which appeared years later in her memoir, revealed its true significance in her life:

> *Though our colony was never settled, and the scheme may be said to have come to naught, it was not without bearing fruit. We gained much useful knowledge; and the intercourse, even by correspondence, with intelligent, progressive minds, was both cheering and helpful; and truly a means of much mental and spiritual uplift – worth tenfold more than it cost us!*

This in fact offers a glimpse of the true power of the utopian scheme. The dream of creating their own Eden gave Sarah and Joel a gleam of hope in the midst of the bleakest poverty, isolated lives filled with failed business deals, recurrent illness and unemployment, crop failures, and the deaths of beloved children. The dream of a better life in an ideal community made their struggle in the New Brunswick bush bearable. ◆

Joanne Findon, a freelance editor and writer, lives in Coquitlam, B.C. She is currently writing a book about Sarah and Joel Craig's utopian colony scheme.

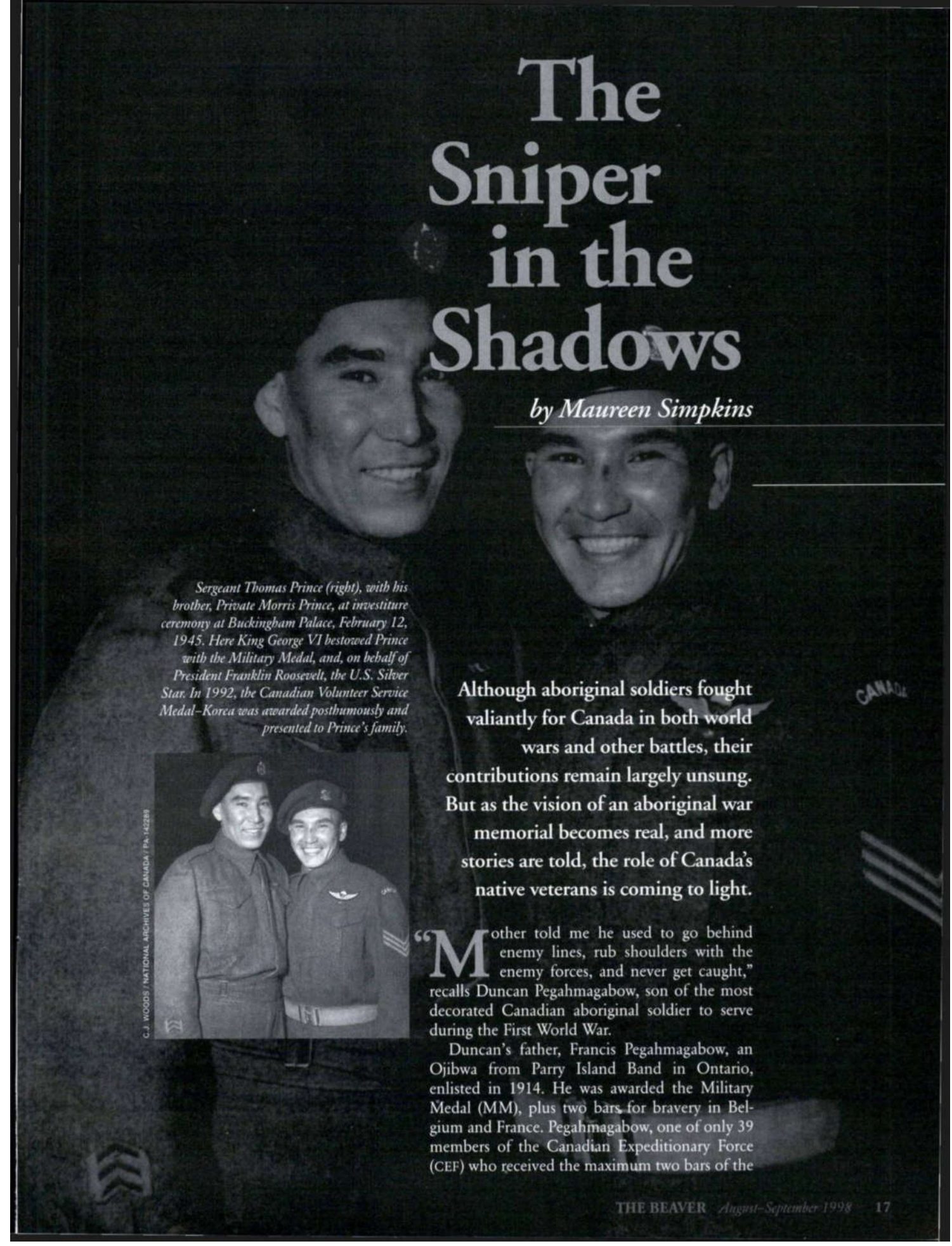


FURTHER READING

Howell, Colin and Michael Smith. "Orthodox Medicine and the Health Reform Movement in the Maritimes, 1850–1885." *Acadiensis* XVIII, no. 2 (Spring 1989): 55–72.

The Sniper in the Shadows

by Maureen Simpkins



Sergeant Thomas Prince (right), with his brother, Private Morris Prince, at investiture ceremony at Buckingham Palace, February 12, 1945. Here King George VI bestowed Prince with the Military Medal, and, on behalf of President Franklin Roosevelt, the U.S. Silver Star. In 1992, the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal–Korea was awarded posthumously and presented to Prince's family.

C.J. WOODS / NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / PA-142289

Although aboriginal soldiers fought valiantly for Canada in both world wars and other battles, their contributions remain largely unsung. But as the vision of an aboriginal war memorial becomes real, and more stories are told, the role of Canada's native veterans is coming to light.

"Mother told me he used to go behind enemy lines, rub shoulders with the enemy forces, and never get caught," recalls Duncan Pegahmagabow, son of the most decorated Canadian aboriginal soldier to serve during the First World War.

Duncan's father, Francis Pegahmagabow, an Ojibwa from Parry Island Band in Ontario, enlisted in 1914. He was awarded the Military Medal (MM), plus two bars for bravery in Belgium and France. Pegahmagabow, one of only 39 members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) who received the maximum two bars of the

MM, was honoured for his outstanding work as a sniper and tracker. Snipers assumed one of the most dangerous infantry roles, and their work was integral to the safety of the group. Most snipers worked with a partner, one shooting while the other kept watch.

Just as these snipers worked in isolation, the role of aboriginal soldiers in all the wars in which Canada has participated has been obscured from public view. More than 7,000 status Indians fought in the two world wars. Some estimate that the number would be closer to 12,000 if non-status Indians were included.

"His gallant stand, without adequate weapons and with a bare handful of men against hopeless odds will remain, for all time, an outstanding example to all ranks of the Regiment."

As the First World War began, the Canadian government refused to allow aboriginal people to serve overseas. This policy purportedly stemmed from the belief that aboriginal prisoners of war might be subjected to more inhumane treatment if the enemy took the stereotypical view of aboriginal peoples as "savages." Also, at this time, many aboriginal communities wanted to be acknowledged as independent nations before they supported the Allied war effort. The government recognition never came. In the end, however, the policy was not strictly enforced and in 1915 was cancelled, largely because of the need for more troops and the great number of aboriginal volunteers who came forward. An estimated 4,000 aboriginal people enlisted in the First World War.

Francis Pegahmagabow fought at Ypres, where he faced poison gas, and on the Somme, where he was shot in the leg. He earned his first bar of the MM at Passchendaele, where the Allies suffered 16,000 casualties.

Details of Pegahmagabow's heroism remained with him and those who fought alongside him, for he rarely spoke of his military accomplishments. His citation reads simply: "At Passchendaele Nov. 6th/7th, 1917, this NCO did excellent work. Before and after the attack he kept in touch with the flanks, advising the units he had seen, this information proving the success of the attack and saving valuable time in consolidating. He also guided the relief to its proper place after it had become mixed up."

Two sons of Cayuga chief Alexander George Smith were both awarded the Military Cross (MC) for gallantry. Alexander Jr., a lieutenant, headed a specialty unit charged with finding locations for stockpiling ammunition, the first in the battalion to go forward. Alexander Smith Jr. earned his MC in France in 1916 during the second Allied assault on the Somme. His citation explains that on the second day of the assault, "he proceeded with a party of bombers and captured an enemy trench and 50 prisoners, displaying the greatest courage throughout. He was twice buried by shells but stuck to his post." Among the 430 casualties his unit suffered during the battle on the Somme were 111 dead.

Chief Smith's other son, Charles, earned his MC in France two days before the war ended while advancing toward Mons, Belgium. His citation reads: "He led his platoon forward with such rapidity that he surprised a party of [enemy] sappers preparing to blow up a road mine." Smith and his men stopped the party just as the fuse was being ignited, and he personally captured an enemy machine gun later that day.

In 1917, another aboriginal soldier was awarded a medal for bravery. During the Battle of Vimy Ridge, George McLean launched a solo attack on a group of enemy soldiers. His citation reads: "Single-handed he captured 19 prisoners, and later, when attacked by five more prisoners who attempted to reach a machine gun, he was able, although wounded, to dispose of them unaided, thus saving a large number of casualties."

Native Soldiers, Foreign Battlefields, written by Janice Summerby and published by the Canadian government's Department of Veterans Affairs, documents a much larger number of heroic stories of aboriginal men in the two world wars. It also speaks of the many women who served as nurses under very difficult and challenging circumstances.

Among them was Edith Anderson Monture, a nurse from the Six Nations Reserve, who was 27 years old when she joined the U.S. Medical Corps in 1917. Without delay, she was sent to Vittel, France, where she treated soldiers who had been shot or gassed. "We would walk right over where there had been fighting. It was an awful sight – buildings in rubble, trees burnt, spent shells all over the place, whole towns blown up."

Monture recounts her recollections of a young American patient, who had been shot in the neck and began hemorrhaging while she was on duty:

> We finally managed to stop the bleeding and settled the boy down. The next night he was real good, but then he hemorrhaged again the next. The night after that he died. It was quite a shock to all of us because we were confident that he was going to be all right. I got his mother's address in the States and wrote her telling her I was with her son when he passed away.

After the war, when Monture returned to Six

NYE / NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / PA-128986

Nations Reserve, she was contacted by the boy's parents. Grateful for her devotion to their dying son, they invited her to visit them in Iowa, which she did; they later visited Monture at her home.

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In 1994, during the fiftieth anniversary of the Allied invasion of Normandy, my father and I sat glued to the television. Every interview, each bit of film footage, wove together the individual stories of thousands of men who stormed ashore that day in June. For my father, it was a particularly thoughtful and difficult moment, for he had his own story to tell.

Like many men of his generation, he rarely talked about his wartime experiences. But that day, perhaps encouraged by the stories on television, my father told me about his experience in the invasion and of the subsequent march to Caen. He talked of the terror he felt as he and his unit marched to Caen, with enemy snipers in the hills. These snipers killed several of his buddies as they marched along at his side. He then mentioned that many Allied snipers were aboriginal men. Often isolated from the rest of the group, they were nevertheless well respected.

Thomas George Prince was well known for his reconnaissance skills. Originally from the Brokenhead Band at Scanterbury, Manitoba, he was a descendant of Peguis, the Saulteaux chief who led his band of 200 Ojibwa from the Sault Ste. Marie region to the Red River in the 1790s, and of chief William Prince, who in 1884 headed the Ojibwa-Manitoba team of Nile Voyageurs.

The tale of the Nile Voyageurs is, in itself, an important chapter in aboriginal Canadian war history. In 1884 the British had put out a call for help. They required men to guide British soldiers up the Nile River to rescue British garrisons trapped in Sudan. Under General Lord Garnet Wolseley, a group of nearly 400 Canadian volunteers, including 56 Mohawks and 30 Ojibwa from Manitoba and Northern Ontario, answered the call. Two aboriginal men lost their lives during this six-month, 19,000-kilometre expedition. By the time the contingent arrived, the British troops had been killed. Yet despite the mission's failure, Canada's military reputation was advanced.

Thomas Prince seems to have carried on the tradition of his ancestors. His wartime experiences are the stuff that movies are made of. He began his wartime career in 1940 as a sapper with the Royal Canadian Engineers. After two years he signed up as a paratrooper with the First Canadian Special Service Battalion. This battalion soon merged with an elite American unit that possessed a variety of specialist skills. It would become known to German soldiers as the Devil's Brigade.

A patrol of Special Service Battalion (known to the enemy as The Devil's Brigade) is briefed before setting out in combat dress and blackened faces to the Anzio beachhead in Italy, April 1944.

As a reconnaissance sergeant, Prince was sent to spy on the Germans in Italy in 1944. Using an old farmhouse as his observation post, he was connected to his unit by only a telephone wire. When his communication line became severed, he dressed in civilian clothes and, pretending to weed his crops, repaired it. He was able to report troop positions and make it back to his unit.

Another story of endurance and valour is of Charles Byce, whose mother was a Cree from Moose Factory and father a non-aboriginal who fought in the First World War. Towards the end of the Second World War in the Netherlands, Byce, as acting corporal, and 23 others set off in rowboats across the Maas River. Their mission was to get behind enemy lines and capture German prisoners to gather information. Byce and five others were to provide cover for the reconnaissance group.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / PA-129070

A chief blesses a new recruit who is about to leave her reserve after enlisting, September 29, 1942. More than 3,000 status and an unknown number of non-status natives enlisted in the Second World War.

After landing behind enemy lines, the reconnaissance group was fired upon from three German positions. Byce single-handedly located two of the positions and destroyed them with grenades. He also obtained important information from a German prisoner before starting back. The patrol escaped safely and Byce received the MM for his courage and initiative.

Just six weeks later, Byce was to earn the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM). In March 1945, members of Byce's regiment, the Lake Sups, engaged the enemy's last major line of defence. Early one morning, they were sent to occupy a group of buildings. Within a few hours their location was revealed and they were bombarded with German shells and mortar. Casualties were high, with all the officers among the victims. While several tanks approached, the Lake Sups held on as their line of defence grew smaller. "With ferocity and courage, Byce, now commanding the remnants of C Company, fought as long as he could; then gathering what few men he was able to find about him he made his way back through the bullet-strewn escape alley," wrote George Stanley, in his 1960 book, *In the Face of Danger*.

Byce ordered the retreat of the remaining men. Staying behind the group, he continued sniping at enemy infantry so they would find it hard to trace the company's withdrawal. Part of his citation reads: "His gallant stand, without adequate weapons and with a bare handful of men against hopeless odds will remain, for all time, an outstanding example to all ranks of the Regiment."

Certainly there are thousands of stories about the courage and heroism of men and women involved in both world wars. What makes these stories of aboriginal veterans even more poignant is that most of them were volunteers, fighting for a country in which they could not even vote. (In fact, status aboriginal people would not get the vote until 1960, long after both wars had ended.) The gulf between how they were treated in the military and how they were treated in civilian life was vast.

Most aboriginal people lived on reserves, isolated from the rest of society, with few opportunities. Their affairs were controlled by a government representative, the Indian agent. For many aboriginal people, life in the military represented a chance for equality. Most felt truly equal in the military and, from most reports, incidents of direct racism were few.

This theme is explored in Janet Davison's master thesis, entitled "We Shall Remember–Canadian Indians and World War II" (1993). Under the extreme circumstances of war, everyone depended on one another, and aboriginal soldiers finally felt respect from non-aboriginal people. For example, during the Second World War, all soldiers were issued a liquor card. For aboriginal soldiers, this was the first time they were allowed in pubs because in Canada, as status Indians, they were not allowed to purchase alcohol. Just to be able to sit and have a beer with a fellow soldier gave many the hope that life would be different when they returned–and that life would be different for their children.

Davison cites cases of commanders who assumed that Indians would feel too confined in

tanks or in submarines and so assigned them to infantry units. Although best known for their skills as runners, snipers, and in reconnaissance, before the war's end, aboriginal soldiers would serve in tanks – and in virtually all aspects of combat duty.

The history of Canada's involvement in war and military conflicts is also connected to the history of many of Canada's aboriginal communities. During the Second World War alone, more than one million Canadian men and women enlisted, including at least 3,000 status aboriginal people and an unknown number of non-status aboriginal people. As a result, many aboriginal communities were left with few men. During the First World War, only three men of the Algonquin of Golden Lake Band who were eligible to volunteer remained on their reserve. In British Columbia's Head of the Lake Band, every man between the ages of 20 and 35 volunteered.

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL VETERANS WAR MONUMENT FUND

Over and over again, aboriginal communities showed their commitment to the war effort. A story in the *Ottawa Citizen* in 1942 tells how an aboriginal man from Moose Factory, listed as AWOL, returned a week later with eight other men from his community who wanted to enlist. Because he had been rounding up recruits, he had missed the once-a-week train to Cochrane.

One of the most-noted contributions came from the Vuntut Gwitchin (Old Crow) Band of the northern Yukon Territories. Members of this band became pen pals with a group of English orphans to whom they sent money following the German air raids.

In 1943, King George VI awarded British Empire Medals to the chiefs of Ontario's Nicikousemenecaning Band (formerly known as Red Gut Band), British Columbia's Kitkatla Band, Manitoba's Norway House Band, and the Vuntut Gwitchin Band for their contribution to the war effort. Canadian Indian bands had donated over $23,000.

Nonetheless, upon registering for service, many Indians lost their status. When they returned, they were not entitled to or were not told of the land grants that other servicemen received, nor could they return to their reserves. In the eyes of the government, these aboriginal veterans were now full Canadian citizens like anyone else. But despite this situation, many were still judged by Indian stereotypes, and barred from drinking establishments, caught in the gap caused by status and non-status policies. Even by the end of the Second World War, the Canadian government held on to the belief, ingrained in policy, that aboriginal people would assimilate into the mainstream of society.

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In November 1996, more than 50 years after the end of the Second World War, it was announced that a memorial to aboriginal veterans, created by aboriginal artist Lloyd Pinay, would be erected near the War Memorial in Ottawa. Such recognition was a long time coming.

A mere 10 years ago, little information was known about the role of aboriginal veterans during the First and Second World Wars and of their treatment upon return. But the actions of a more visible and activist aboriginal community have led to increased awareness. The announcement to build the memorial came on the heels of a 1995 Senate committee report that examined the treatment of aboriginal veterans.

Responsibility for funding the new aboriginal war memorial remains with the veterans themselves. The Department of Indian Affairs has contributed money for startup costs, but the bulk of the fundraising has been taken on by the National Aboriginal Veterans' Association. In a December 1996 issue of *Windspeaker,* Sam Sinclair, president of the association, was quoted: "For the first time [veterans] feel they're part of something they don't want to let go of. ... for the betterment of themselves, their children and their grandchildren. ... We're only asking to be equally represented so people can say 'these people did a fine job in the world wars.' "

Since that evening four years ago, watching the anniversary of the invasion at Normandy, my father has passed away. His stories of his time in France will always stay with me. Hopefully, the Veterans Affairs (by publishing more stories of aboriginal veterans) and the National Aboriginal Veterans Association (by its commitment to the aboriginal war memorial) will bring the aboriginal sniper out of the shadows and into the history books. ◆

Model of the proposed Aboriginal War Veterans Monument designed by Lloyd Pinay. The nine-metre-high, bronze-and-stone statue will feature four panels depicting aboriginal contributions to Canada's wars and peacekeeping efforts. Aboriginal spirit guides are represented, with the uppermost, a thunderbird, symbolizing the creator and spirit of the aboriginal people. Four figures from various First Nations hold symbols of peace and war.

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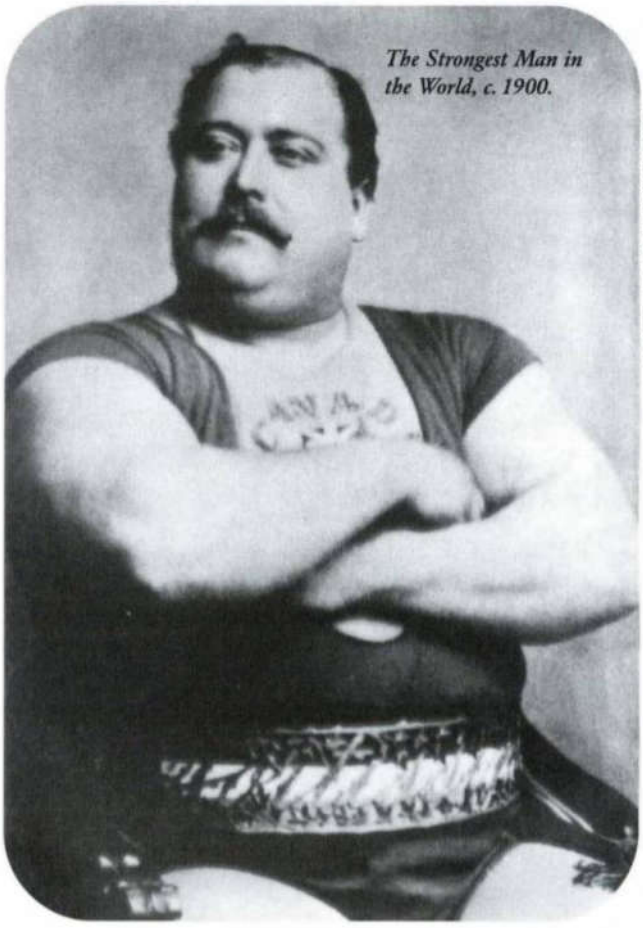
Louis Cyr: One Strong Canadian

by C.H. Russell

A gentle-natured farm boy from Napierville, Quebec, performed feats of strength that, 100 years later, remain unmatched.



The Strongest Man in the World, c. 1900.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C-086343

Physical strength has long fascinated us. Throughout history, different cultures have included in their literature tales of heroes possessing enormous physical power. Many of those tales – the stories of Samson and Hercules, for example – date from ancient times, yet remain popular today. Similarly, fictitious characters such as Superman and Xena have become embedded in North American culture and have won admiration by combating evil with their feats of superhuman strength.

Our fascination with muscle power is not only confined to legend and fantasy. Every four years we witness the performances of Olympic weightlifters, whose tortured struggles with sagging barbells evoke awe from an audience of millions. The charisma of strength is also evident in the popularity of muscled movie heroes, such as Stallone and Schwarzenegger, actors whose architectural physiques have become synonymous with strength and the consummate physical form. Whether they belong to legend, fiction, or present reality, those possessing enormous strength enjoy a special place in humanity's collective history.

The strongest of the strong, however, was Canada's own Louis Cyr, who, a century ago, astonished the world with his remarkable demonstrations of physical might. Cyr's strength went beyond his powerful body; he also possessed fine personal qualities such as kindness, generosity, and quiet dignity – traits that had their roots in his humble origins.

Cyr's story begins near Montreal in the village of Saint-Cyprien-de-Napierville, a quaint community of the type immortalized in the poetry of William Henry Drummond. The first of 17 children, the robust Acadian was born on October 10, 1863 (reportedly tipping the scales at 18 pounds). He was baptized Noé-Cyprien.

Strength seems to have run in Cyr's family. His paternal grandfather, Pierre Cyr, was renowned in his home village for his physical prowess, as was his father before him, who lived to age 102. Imposing physical stature and strength were not confined to the Cyr side of the family, however; Cyr's mother was a towering woman of 240 pounds, who thought nothing of toting heavy sacks of flour from which many men would shy.

Although details of Noé-Cyprien's early life are sketchy, it is certain that his grandfather was a major influence on him. Pierre Cyr instilled in his grandson an admiration and desire for great physical strength, often encouraging him to move heavy logs and stones. Grandfather Cyr also took Noé-Cyprien to watch the village blacksmith, who would perform such astonishing feats as picking

up an anvil by its horn and bending rods of iron in his bare hands. Under his grandfather's tutelage, Cyr became unusually powerful; by age 12, the boy could carry calves on his back and easily defeat grown men at arm-wrestling.

Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, the Cyr family grew. The addition of new mouths to feed strained the household budget, and it fell upon Noé-Cyprien, as the eldest child, to leave school and find employment. But steady work in Saint-Cyprien was rare, and the young Cyr met with little success – until he performed a good deed for a man named Gagnon, a local lumberman.

Cyr had encountered Gagnon by chance while walking through nearby woods. Gagnon had injured one of his legs and was unable to get back to his horse and wagon some distance away. By now well aware of his abilities, Cyr offered to carry Gagnon on his back through the woods to safety. Though skeptical at first, Gagnon agreed and was flabbergasted when they reached his wagon. In a matter of days, Gagnon visited the Cyr household and offered to engage Noé-Cyprien as a lumberjack's helper.

Cyr worked for Gagnon for almost three years, winning – sometimes by fisticuffs – the respect of his coworkers. In the off-season Cyr worked on Gagnon's farm, where he continued to grow in size and strength: by age 15, he stood 5 feet 10 inches tall (a half-inch under his full adult height) and weighed 200 pounds. His robustness did not preclude illness, however, and the adolescent Cyr was stricken with typhoid. Sidelined from hard labour, and with time on his hands, Cyr used his convalescence to indulge his other passion, music, and learned to play an unlikely instrument: the violin.

Even with Noé-Cyprien's help, the Cyr family's fortunes still suffered. Faced with limited options, in 1878 they decided to follow the lead of many Quebeckers of the era and migrate to the United States. The move to Lowell, Massachusetts, marked the beginning of many changes in Cyr's life. Louis soon found work at a textile factory, tossing 100-pound bales of cotton about as easily as we might a telephone book. It wasn't long before Cyr became bored, and, as is the wont of many teenage boys, he began showing off. His casual displays of strength were well appreciated by his fellow employees, but proved to be a distraction. Wishing to avoid any lapses in productivity, the plant manager reassigned Cyr – who by now had changed his given name to Louis (which was easier for his new anglophone friends to pronounce) – to janitorial work. Finding this confining, mundane, and unchallenging, young Louis sought farm work and the following spring began working just outside of Lowell, on a farm owned by a man named Dan Bawdy. One afternoon Louis and his boss encountered a neighbour whose overladen wagon had become hopelessly stuck on a muddy road. Despite the horse's best efforts, the wheels remained lodged in the mire. Cyr and Bawdy stood by and watched in amusement the farmer's rising frustration, but intervened when the man began to flog the horse mercilessly. After calming the horse, Cyr positioned himself under the wagon, while Bawdy attempted to cool the farmer's hot temper. To the astonishment of Bawdy and his neighbour, Cyr raised the wagon out of the mud until the wheels were clear of the ruts. He then moved it sideways several inches and set the vehicle down on drier earth. This Herculean feat demonstrated not only Louis's strength, but also the kind and generous nature that was to win him many friends throughout his life. News of Cyr's deed spread rapidly through the rural community, and his name was soon on everyone's lips. Though Louis viewed his act as no more than a neighbourly favour, Bawdy was convinced that the young man had a promising future as a performing strongman. He urged Cyr to travel to Boston to participate in a competition being held to determine the strongest man in the United States. The following month, Louis, his father, and his brother set off for Boston. Louis's life would never be the same.

Strength competitions in the late nineteenth century differed from those of modern times. Today, formal competitions involve balanced barbells lifted by a variety of established techniques and with the benefit of hand resin, support belts, and careful diet and training. In Cyr's time, however, lifts usually consisted of hoisting large objects such as boulders (or as in the case of the Boston competition, a horse) off the ground, as far as the contestant could lift them.

In Boston, having made it easily through the elimination rounds, Louis was faced with two competitors. Each in turn would attempt to lift a Percheron, a large breed of cart horse. Having witnessed the failed efforts of the other lifters, the audience was skeptical of the young and unknown Cyr. They found him an amusing sight as well, a seemingly chubby lad in a tight coat, wearing long, blond curls like a latter-day Samson. But the sniggering soon stopped as the Percheron's hooves left the earth. The 18-year-old Quebecker was now the strongest man in the United States.

Victorious, Louis returned to a hero's welcome in Lowell, where a dance was held in his honour. It was there that his fortunes took another good turn, for he made the acquaintance of Melina Comtois.

Soon after, the families Cyr and Comtois moved back to Quebec; Louis and Melina were wed. Louis obtained work as a lumberjack. Despite the reputation that preceded him, some of the camp ruffians determined to challenge him to a fight. Upon beholding his powerful frame, however, the roughnecks thought it better to forego their violent intentions. Louis was a welcome addition to the camp and came to be well liked and respected. He gave informal demonstrations of his strength, and the camp became a sort of shrine, attracting spectators from all parts of Quebec.

As Cyr's fame grew, so did the scorn of David Michaud, who had been regarded as the strongest man in Canada for the past decade. Michaud despised Cyr, for besides being his rival in strength he had also been his rival in love: Michaud had hoped to court Melina before she met Cyr.

Not surprisingly, Michaud issued a formal challenge to Cyr, which Louis readily accepted. The contest was set to take place near Quebec City. Despite conditions favourable to Michaud (the boulders used in the contest were ones with which he was familiar and Cyr was not), Cyr won handily by raising a 522-pound stone to shoulder height. With the defeat of Michaud, Cyr added the title of Strongest Man in Canada to his U.S. title, and his fame soon spread from coast to coast.

Though Louis's presence brought considerable celebrity to the lumber camp, it also became an obstacle to productivity, much as it had at the textile factory in Lowell. The camp boss hoped that Louis's victory over Michaud would encourage him to pursue a career as a professional strongman. Whether Louis was aware of this or not, he needed little coaxing to leave; the separation from his wife was becoming unbearable, and Cyr decided to return with her to Lowell.

Back in Massachusetts, Cyr again looked for work in farming or lumbering. Melina was now carrying a child, and financial concerns were utmost in Louis's mind. In the meantime, he competed locally to enhance his reputation.

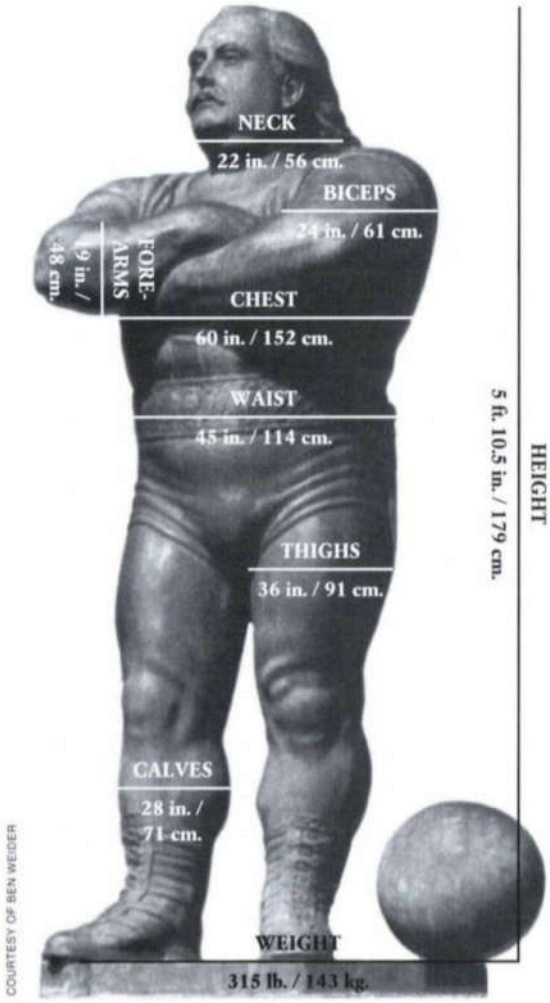
It was during this period in 1882 that Louis learned a tough lesson. His abilities had come to the attention of a rascal named MacSohmer, who presented himself as an able promoter and proposed to take Cyr on the road for $35 per week – then a respectable sum of money. They would tour Canada and perform to sold-out venues, thus advancing Louis's career and earning a secure living. Despite some initial reservations, Louis and Melina agreed, unaware that MacSohmer was planning to cheat them. Claiming there were unanticipated expenses, MacSohmer paid Cyr only a small fraction of what was owed to him and pocketed the balance. Cyr grew wise, abandoning his glib and ignoble partner before an impatient and hostile audience, while he and Melina took a train back to Quebec.

COURTESY OF BEN WEIDER

Cyr, a consummate performer known throughout the world, nonetheless maintained his humble peasant demeanour.

Fortune was about to smile on Cyr, however. On a trip to Pointe-Levis, Louis found an honest promoter in the person of Georges Denis, a policeman. The two formed a friendship and staged a successful show in Pointe-Levis, with Louis taking the lion's share of the profits, about $200. That was followed by another, equally profitable show, and soon the Cyrs were out of debt and on firm financial footing. But the upturn in their luck was darkened by the tragic conclusion of Melina's pregnancy – the boy to whom she gave birth died in early infancy.

Once Cyr saw how profitable the strongman business could be, he embraced it as a profession, organizing a touring road show in which he billed himself as The Strongest Man in the World. It was



*A statue of Cyr in parc des Hommes Forts, Montreal. Superimposed in the foreground: Louis Cyr's measurements, at the peak of his career, about 1894.**

largely a family affair, with Louis's father acting as his agent. The tour travelled throughout Quebec and was an immense financial success. It also gave Louis an indication of his growing popularity, especially in Saint-Cyprien, where schoolchildren were given the day off when his show came to town.

The tour ended with Melina's second pregnancy. Louis vowed not to repeat the circumstances of her first, in which he was often absent to work in the lumber camp, or they were travelling on the ill-fated MacSohmer tour. This would be a sedentary term, with Louis determined to be at his wife's side.

Cyr, unemployed again, was soon approached by a professional promoter named Gus Lambert, a successful businessman with many connections. Although Cyr had a keen interest in Lambert's promotional ideas, he made it clear that he had placed his strongman career in abeyance for the duration of Melina's pregnancy (but was eager to resume it afterwards). Lambert thought it well worth the wait, and using his connections to the mayor of Montreal, arranged to have Cyr put his immense strength to work temporarily as a police officer. Louis readily agreed, and he and Melina moved to Montreal.

Cyr was a formidable constable, powerful and remarkably agile for a man of 300 pounds. He was just what the police needed to help quell the troubles in the nearby village of Sainte-Cunégonde, a hive of villainy known for murderous thieves and corrupt policemen. Though of gentle character, Cyr was capable of much harm when forced to defend himself – a fact made painfully clear to the hapless thugs who were foolish enough to attack him.

The police had planned a trap in which Cyr and two other officers were the bait. They wandered into Sainte-Cunégonde and pretended to be lost and afraid, seemingly easy prey for the criminals. When the trio was surrounded by gangs of toughs, plainclothes policemen emerged from hiding and a melee ensued. The operation was a huge success, and Cyr subdued several of the miscreants singlehandedly, locking their vainly struggling bodies in the inescapable yoke of his huge, iron-like arms.

Naturally, the criminals of Sainte-Cunégonde sought vengeance. They planned a counterstrike, with Cyr as their prime target. When on foot patrol, Cyr and his partner, a constable named Proulx, were ambushed by a hatchet-wielding mob. The ambuscade backfired, however: as Proulx fought and hollered for assistance, Cyr gave one of the would-be assassins the surprise of his life, tossing him about like a doll and using him as a human shield and cudgel against his attackers. Police reinforcements soon arrived, and many of the beaten, murderous horde were taken into custody. Cyr sustained a small slash to his forearm, but Proulx, tragically, died later of head wounds. The thug that Cyr converted into a weapon was hospitalized with serious injuries and jailed after his recovery. Once order was restored to Sainte-Cunégonde and Melina gave birth to a daughter, Emiliana, Cyr resigned from the police force.

Their financial worries behind them, the Cyrs bought a tavern in Montreal, over which Louis kept a vigilant eye. To entertain the customers, Louis would perform impromptu feats of strength, such as carrying huge kegs of beer or lifting the diminutive Melina over the bar on the palm of his hand. The tavern was successful, but it was more of a sideline for the man known as

*Source: Ben Weider, *The Strongest Man in History: Louis Cyr* (Toronto: Mitchell Press, 1976), p. 2.

The ease with which Louis disposed of Pennell threatened his career temporarily, for it had the effect of frightening away other challengers.

the Canadian Hercules. It was 1886, and Cyr, now 22 years old, began to tour again under the management of Lambert, ready to accept any challenge to his claim of being the strongest man in the world.

The first notable challenge came from Robert Pennell, the United States weightlifting champion and baseball pitcher who embodied the all-American hero. Undaunted as usual, Cyr met Pennell and defeated him effortlessly in three lifts – including a one-arm curl of 127 pounds, 25 heavier than that of his humiliated opponent. The ease with which Louis disposed of Pennell threatened his career temporarily, however, for it had the effect of frightening away other challengers. Aware that the strongman profession was as much show-biz as brute strength and technique, Louis's supporters circulated a rumour that he was in exceptionally rare form in his victory over Pennell, and that he was unlikely repeat it. Although a lie, it gave competing lifters the courage to come forth again. Cyr had learned another lesson, and in all subsequent competitions he was sure to lift only what was required to win.

Over the next decade, Cyr toured extensively throughout the United States and Canada. A prodigy in his prime, Cyr during this period performed some of his most memorable lifts: in 1888, he executed a back lift of 3,536 pounds (a record he demolished four years later in England, and three years after that in Boston); in 1889, a one-arm lift (held at arm's length) of 265 pounds; and in 1890, a flabbergasting one-finger lift of 490 pounds. The record for this latter lift was later broken by Cyr himself, with a weight of 553 pounds!

Throughout this period, Cyr defeated all rivals, of which there was no shortage. The queue

COURTESY OF BEN WEIDER

The Troupe Cyr: Cyr, with Melina and entourage, at the height of his success.

Muscle Bound

COURTESY OF BEN WEIDER

Little did Louis Cyr know that his legend would inspire an international fitness movement. According to Ben Weider, president of the International Federation of Bodybuilders, Cyr was an early inspiration to him and his brother Joe, who are considered to be the founding fathers of the sport of bodybuilding.

Ben Weider first heard of Louis Cyr while a child living in the farm community of Saint-Lin, Quebec, in the 1930s. Area farmers would speak of Cyr's legendary strength, says Ben. "He was a Quebec hero – his reputation was known all over the province." The young Weider decided then that he would write a book on the Quebec strongman. Some 40 years later, *The Strongest Man in History: Louis Cyr* was published by Mitchell Press.

The Weider boys, who later lived in Montreal, would build a bodybuilding and fitness empire through publications, competitions, fitness products, and promotion of the sport through the now-169-member Federation (not to mention the sponsorship, in 1969, of a young Austrian bodybuilder with the unlikely name of Schwarzenegger). Bodybuilding received official Olympic designation in January of 1998, an achievement that "only took 52 years," according to Ben Weider, who started lobbying the Olympic Committee in 1946. Let the games begin.

Ben Weider and his collection of Cyr memorabilia in his Montreal office, headquarters of the International Federation of Bodybuilders.

to challenge Louis Cyr extended to Europe and included many strongmen of repute, such as Sebastien Miller, Franz "Cyclops" Bienkowski, and August Johnson of Sweden, the most able opponent Cyr ever faced.

If there was any doubt that Cyr was an international phenomenon, it was erased in London, England, on the night of January 19, 1892. There was standing room only at the Royal Aquarium, and police claimed later that at least 5,000 people were turned away at the door. Cyr performed especially well that evening, increasing his back-lift record to 3,635 pounds and his finger lift to 551 pounds. Significant too was that before the start of the show, Cyr had issued a challenge to the incredible German-born strongman Eugene Sandow, who declined to accept. Sandow's then and subsequent refusals to compete served to entrench Cyr firmly as the world's strongest man.

Britain's beau monde were not immune to the effects of "Cyrmania." The Canadian strongman was adored by the English elite, as much for his gargantuan appetite – it was not unusual for Cyr to dispose of up to 22 pounds of meat at a sitting, plus vegetables and dessert – as for his strength, sportsmanship, and showmanship. The Marquis of Queensbury was especially taken with Cyr, and at a banquet in the latter's honour made him a proposal: if Cyr could restrain two of the nobleman's horses using only his arms, one of the fine beasts would be the strongman's to take home. Louis accepted. Harnessed to his massive arms, the horses were placed to face in opposite directions and were commanded to move forward. The animals strained to obey but could not; Cyr stood immovable between them and held them firmly in place.

Cyr returned to North America an undisputed champion, and continued to tour and exceed his own records. Perhaps his most sensational demonstration was in Boston in 1895 when he broke his back-lift record. Eighteen of the heaviest men in the audience were called to the stage, where they sat on a large, strong plank resting on trestles. The combined weight of the men and the plank was an unimaginable 4,337 pounds. To the amazement of all, Cyr raised this burden off the supports. That record has stood for over a century.

Notwithstanding, Louis Cyr had yet to compete against the one lifter that rivalled his talents, August Johnson of Sweden. The two met in 1896,

Louis Cyr's Records

pounds *kilograms*

BACK LIFT

4,337 **1,967**

PRESS

Three movements without the weight touching his body:

A) using two hands

347 **157.4**

B) using right hand

273.25 **123.95**

C) using left hand

273.25 **123.95**

HOLD-OUT

front

131.25 **59.5**

sideways

185.25 **84**

97.25 / 44 right, 88 / 40 left

PRESS

from shoulder to arms length using both hands

162.5 **73.7**

done 36 times in succession

from shoulder with one hand (assisted shoulder)

350 **158.76**

LIFTS

from ground to several inches:

A) using two hands

1,897 **860.5**

B) using one hand

987 **447.7**

C) using one finger

553 **250.8**

HIP-LIFT WITH HARNESS

3,538 **1,605**

OTHER

Lifted a 433-lb. / 196-kg. barrel of cement up to his shoulders with one hand without using his knees.

Source: Ben Weider, *The Strongest Man in History: Louis Cyr* (Toronto: Mitchell Press, 1976), p. 102.

and the match proved to be Cyr's hardest-won victory, lasting for three tense hours before Johnson ceded graciously to Cyr. Both contestants' hands were bleeding, and Cyr, though gratified by his victory, knew that he had won by a narrow margin.

Cyr next accepted an offer to tour with P.T. Barnum's circus. His circus career was brief, but lasted long enough for him to form an enduring friendship with another show member, heavyweight boxing champion John L. Sullivan. The two had met before in Boston, their initial contact unfriendly. Sullivan, a heavy drinker, had entered a tavern and declared drinks for everyone at his expense. Cyr, eating at a table across the room, had refused Sullivan's offer, stating that he had come for food, not drink. The pugilist, terribly affronted, responded with a solid punch to Cyr's barrel-like chest. Cyr calmly grabbed Sullivan with one hand and tossed him – overhand – against the wall. When Sullivan recovered his senses, he demanded to know who had just beaten him. Cyr introduced himself and extended his hand in friendship.

While in Barnum's employ, the toll taken by the Johnson contest began to show. Cyr was tired and losing weight, his organs beginning to deteriorate from years of overextending himself and from his extreme eating habits. It was plain to all who knew him that the 37-year-old champion was ill, suffering from kidney inflammation, asthma, and heart illness. In 1899 Cyr, aware that his body demanded rest, left the circus and returned to his farm near Montreal and the ministrations of Dr. Donald Hingston, who placed him on a milk diet.

Despite his declining health, Louis Cyr took on his last challenger, Hector Décarie, in early 1906. Though 15 years older than his opponent, an ailing Cyr did his best against Décarie and the match was ruled a draw. At that juncture Cyr made a typically sporting gesture that signalled the end of his career: he raised Décarie's arm and declared him successor to the title of Strongest Man in the World.

Louis Cyr passed away at his daughter's home on November 10, 1912, of Bright's Disease, a kidney ailment. As news of his death spread rapidly across the continent, the people of Montreal celebrated the life of Louis Cyr in grand style. His funeral was attended by hundreds, and as his remains were laid to rest, so was the era of the nineteenth-century strongman, an era that produced Louis Cyr, one *strong* Canadian. ◆

CANADIAN MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION / K83-192

Wood-carving from the early twentieth century by Eugène Desrosiers of Richelieu County, Quebec.

C.H. Russell, of Toronto, is a historian and freelance writer. He is currently working on a collection of short stories about Toronto's east end.

The Sisters of St. Ann & Their Vancouver Island Mission

by Philip Jensen

Although she grew up illiterate as a result of British efforts to Anglicize Quebec's schools, Marie-Esther Blondin would eventually become a teacher and the foundress of the Order of the Sisters of St. Ann. Today the restored St. Ann's Academy in Victoria, British Columbia, stands as a monument to the selfless work of the women who emigrated to the Pacific Coast to teach the poor children of the forest.

Mother Mary Ann (Marie Esther Blondin, 1809-1890) foundress of the Sisters of St. Ann.

PHILIP JENSEN

The restored St. Ann's Academy, Victoria.

After the last class graduated in 1973, St. Ann's Academy languished, seeming to mourn for a glory that could never return. The nuns remained for a few months, attending to the manifold tasks associated with leaving their home of more than 100 years, then they too moved on. For a while government workers occupied an entire wing, but the once-magnificent structure was crumbling around them and eventually had to be abandoned. Then in 1993, the St. Ann's Rescue Community Coalition and the Greater Victoria Concerned Citizens Association got involved.

I attended the opening of the restored St. Ann's Academy in December 1997. Our guide, a woman approaching middle age, was a member of the last class to graduate from the school. As she spoke of the sisters' early days, I could see their silent figures gliding shadowlike over the polished wooden floors and feel their black robes gently stirring the air as they passed.

It was the spring of 1858, and the Sisters of St. Ann were preparing to leave their convent home in Quebec. Five months before, Bishop Modeste Demers had visited them and touched their hearts with his stories of the poor children of the forest. All 38 members agreed to accompany him, but only four nuns and one lay auxiliary were chosen. They were Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, Sister Mary Angele, Sister Mary Lumena, Sister Mary of the Conception, and Marie Mainville.

Their destination was the Pacific Coast; their mission to establish a school at Fort Victoria on Vancouver Island, a foreign country occupied by Indians and Protestants. "Adieux dear sisters, adieux forever. ... Already four of your daughters are going from you, never more to see you," Sister Mary Angele wrote in her diary. "It is April fourteenth, the day of our departure from our beautiful Canada, our country, if indeed, hereafter, there be one for us here on earth."

There were three ways to travel from Quebec to the Pacific Coast in 1858, all of them difficult. Rounding Cape Horn was far too risky, and Demers had experienced the hazardous overland journey on his first trip west. He prudently chose the Isthmus of Panama route for the small group of new missionaries. The 8,000-mile journey took 54 days and included voyages on two oceans. The Panama Canal didn't yet exist, but the travellers were able to cross the isthmus in only three hours by train.

They arrived at Fort Victoria on Saturday, June 5, to find it much different from the isolated trading post they'd anticipated. During Demers's absence it had grown from a settlement consisting of a few rough cabins into a town of more than 200 houses and hordes of tents. Gold had been discovered in the Cariboo and more than 20,000 people would pass through Victoria before the year's end.

After a pleasant dinner with friends, the bishop and his small group were led through the bush to a clapboard-covered log cabin at the edge of a dismal swamp. Demers, who had purchased the building for $500, was dismayed at its condition. Windows were broken, the floor was dirt, the doors wouldn't latch. And it was littered with the belongings of a woman who had died there years before.

"May the Blessed Virgin, Saint Joseph and the Holy Angels be your protection," he said, as he left the nuns to spend that first night in their new convent home.

School opened two days later, with the 18-by-30-foot cabin serving as both classroom and living quarters. The sisters taught on one side of the chimney, cooked on the other, and slept on the dirt floor at night. It was from this small beginning that the Sisters of St. Ann, an order of teaching sisters from rural Quebec, became inextricably linked with the history of the Pacific Northwest.

Mother Mary Ann, foundress of the order, began life in 1809 as Marie Esther Blondin. Quebec's once-proud educational system had been in a state of decline for 50 years, and it was unlikely Marie Esther would ever learn to read. This was the result of policies initiated by the British after the 1759 capitulation of France in Quebec. It was their intention to Anglicize the populace and convert it to the Protestant faith. The school system figured largely in their plans.

An official document of the period states:

> To the End that the Church of England might be established both in Principle and in Practice, and that the said inhabitants might by degrees be induced to embrace the Protestant Religion, and their children be brought up in the Principles there-of, we do hereby declare it to be our intention ... that all possible encouragement shall be given to the Erecting of Protestant schools by settling, appointing, allotting proper Quantities of land ... and for Maintenance for a Protestant Minister and Protestant Schoolmasters.

The people refused to send their children to the new schools, and within a few generations no more than a few members of each parish were able to read or write. At the age of 20, the future foundress of St. Ann's Academy entered the service of the Sisters of Notre Dame as an illiterate.

Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart

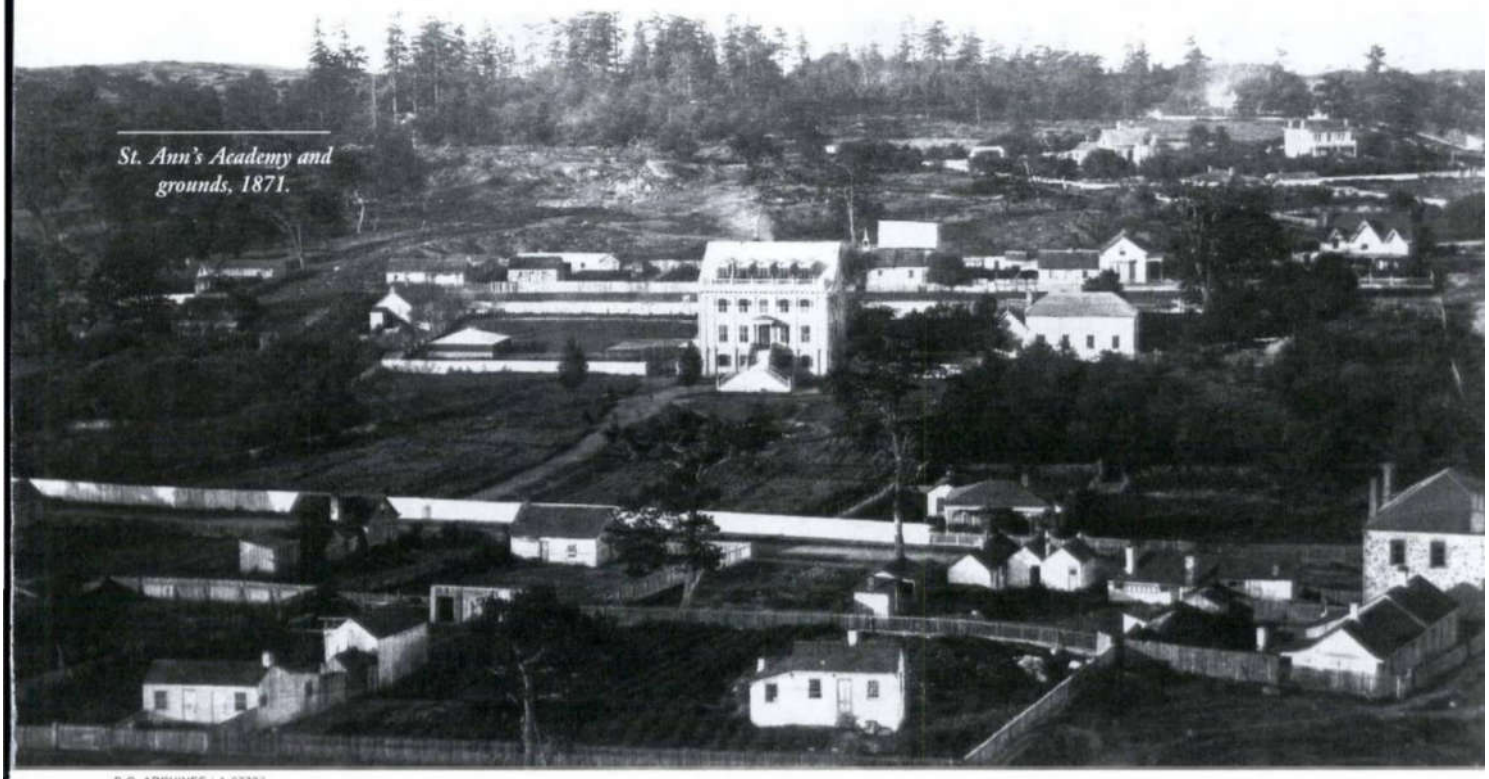
Sister Mary Angele

Sister Mary Lumena

Sister Mary of the Conception

The four Sisters of St. Ann who first came to Victoria.

ARCHIVES OF THE SISTERS OF ST. ANN, VICTORIA, B.C.



St. Ann's Academy and grounds, 1871.

B.C. ARCHIVES / A-07737

A note written by the bursar states, "I give her only six pounds a month, but ... I have promised to show her how to read." Soon afterwards Marie Esther enrolled as a full-time student at the convent, and in 1831 began her novitiate.

Quebec had endured a crippled educational system for more than 70 years, so people began taking matters into their own hands, establishing private schools wherever teachers could be found. With her meager one or two years of schooling, Blondin was recruited as a teaching assistant to Miss Suzanne Pineault, directress of one of these institutions. After six years together, Miss Pineault left and Blondin took her place.

The Blondin Academy, as it eventually became known, was located in the village of Vaudreuil, 24 miles west of Montreal. It was soon recognized as one of the most progressive in the district. But the directress never forgot her roots. She'd been raised in a rural area where there were no opportunities for education and wanted to help the many children still living in similar circumstances. After 15 successful years at the academy, she began contemplating a religious community of teaching sisters who would devote themselves to this work. In 1848 she presented the idea to Bishop Bourget of the diocese of Montreal.

While Blondin contemplated her plans for a religious community of teaching sisters, a Mr. James Douglas was busy establishing a trading post for the Hudson's Bay Company on Vancouver Island. Seemingly oblivious to the British policy of wiping out Catholicism in Quebec, he invited the Church to establish a mission at Fort Victoria. His motives were practical rather than spiritual. A Spanish-Catholic mission had once existed on Vancouver Island, and he supposed the presence of a priest might be helpful if the Indians ever became difficult.

Father Modeste Demers was consecrated as bishop of Vancouver Island in 1846. His mission was to Christianize the natives and redeem the white men who had adopted Indian habits and were living in a state of licence. He immediately set off in search of assistance, travelling first to Quebec, then throughout Europe, attempting to promote interest. During his absence, Marie Esther Blondin's dream reached fruition. In 1850 the Order of the Sisters of St. Ann was canonically established with six members, including Susanne Pineault, who had given Blondin her start as a teacher. Bishop Demers returned to Vancouver Island two years later with three priests and one subdeacon. But he still needed help, and made a further recruiting trip to Quebec in 1857.

The Order of St. Ann was a relatively young organization, but Demers sensed an opportunity and asked the bishop of Montreal to speak to them about his work. Bourget complied and wrote back, "I think these Sisters would be glad to accept the mission of Vancouver Island and I think that they would accomplish much good."

Sister Mary des Sept Douleurs described the subsequent meeting between Demers and the sisters in her history of the first 10 years of the order: "The missionary bishop ... spoke to us as

PHILIP JENSEN

The east wing of the Academy (southeast view).
The central part of this wing, the first section built, was designed by Father Joseph Michaud and built by Charles Vereydhen in 1871; the eastern portion of the wing was completed in 1886 by John Teague.
The extension on the left is the chapel. The first Roman Catholic cathedral in Victoria, it was built in 1858 by Father Michaud, and in 1886 skidded on logs to its present location. For many years the chapel was encased in brick, but during renovations this was removed and the structure was clad in the same material as the rest of the Academy. The central belltower is characteristic of Quebec country churches of the era.

PHILIP JENSEN

The original Log Cabin School.
Supposedly the oldest building in Victoria, it predates the sisters' arrival in 1858. The exterior has always been covered with clapboard, but the square log construction is visible on the interior.
The sisters described their first convent home as "a building made from tree trunks."

B.C. ARCHIVES / A-07803

Classroom, 1906.

only the heart of an apostle can speak of the great misery of the poor Indians, and the fear he had of seeing the Protestants trying to thwart the progress of Catholicism in British Columbia."

Considering the French-Canadian experience of Protestants, Demers's fear was understandable. And an event on the westward journey illustrates that it wasn't limited to naive French-Canadian priests and nuns. On the first leg of its voyage, the ship touched at Cuba, but no one was permitted ashore. Sister Mary des Sept Douleurs explained, "The reason why we did not disembark at Havana is that Cuba, a Catholic country, has laws forbidding all strangers to disembark ... for fear of introducing the Protestant religion and diseases."

As much as the sisters' dread of Protestants preyed on their minds, it was displaced by more pressing issues after their arrival in Victoria. The curriculum they had prepared included basic academics, and instruction in religion, needlework, care of church linen, playing the organ, and the use of a chair, a table, and kitchen utensils. But now they found the student body would encompass more than a small group of Indian children who had never attended school. Instead, the sisters were expected to teach a complex interracial mixture of pupils, including the children of Hudson's Bay Company employees and the three daughters of Governor James Douglas.

The pioneer missionaries had been chosen more for their ability to adapt to new and difficult conditions than for any skill as educators. Even the fact that only one of them spoke any English hadn't seemed important when they had been selected. But the circumstances they now faced were much different from what had been anticipated. The following year, in answer to their pleas for help, the Mother House sent out a new superior.

Sister Mary Providence was Irish Canadian, 22 years old, and a well-qualified academic. She went to work designing an appropriate curriculum, procuring textbooks, and training the sisters for their tasks. And when the Log Cabin School became hopelessly overcrowded, she rented another building to accommodate the overflow. Then, in response to the demands of the white population, she split the student body on the basis of race. The Indian and black students continued at the free Log Cabin School, while the white children attended what she called the Broad Street Select School. Outraged by this discrimination, the black families appealed to the bishop for support. Demers immediately ordered the superior to change things back to the way they'd been, but the resulting outcry from the upper-class whites was more than even he could withstand. He reluctantly ordered the superior to go back to the system she'd devised. The arrangement pandered to unhealthy racial attitudes, but it also provided some clear benefits. For one thing, splitting the student body into homogeneous groups made the teaching job easier. More important, those aspiring to the status of the Select School were required to pay tuition fees. That a portion of the money should be used to help support the free Log Cabin School was no concern of the upper-class white students. Perhaps that was the plan all along. In any case, this was the beginning of a system that would support what the sisters had always regarded as their real work, teaching children who would never have any other opportunity for education.

In this new country, the Sisters of St. Ann were much respected and admired for their work. And that Governor Douglas was among the first to place his children under their tutelage added even more to their standing in the community. Unfortunately, an issue of discipline would ultimately bring this relationship to an end. Governor Douglas had important social obligations that sometimes conflicted with what the sisters believed was appropriate. And when he took his family to a ball onboard a visiting man-of-war, he was informed of a school rule against dances. His immediate response to the Mother Superior was respectful, but clear:

> His Excellency learns with admiration the principles of rule which the Reverend Mother Superior proposes to maintain in regard to dances. ... Such occasions do not occur frequently, but if the Reverend Superior looks upon them as infractions of the Convent regulations, His Excellency will be reduced of necessity, though with regret, to withdraw his daughters from the school.
>
> Finally, His Excellency begs the Reverend Superior to accept his expression of very high esteem.
>
> Government House, March 17, 1859

Eleven other girls of Victoria's upper social class were withdrawn at the same time. A note in the school records expresses regret for the incident, but supports strict adherence to the rules: "A little more experience on the conditions in this country, so different from those of Canada, would have prevented this episode. But circumstances increase our admiration of those who wished to conserve the customs of the order to banish a worldly spirit in our educational houses."

The Sisters of St. Ann accepted the demands of their religious calling without hesitation, going wherever they were needed, touching

and changing the history of the area. During the 1860s, they opened a school in the Cowichan Valley, then moved across the Georgia Strait to operate another one at New Westminster and another at Mission. They moved further inland to Kamloops, then into northern B.C., Alaska, and the Yukon. And the faith that inspired them also made them useful in the white man's conquest of the new land and its people.

The strategy of dominating a people by controlling their schools had failed dismally in Quebec, but it worked superbly in the Pacific Northwest. Through their acceptance of the sisters' religion and schooling, the native people unwittingly submitted to the authority of the white race. But even in that time and place there were a few who came to understand the bargain they'd inadvertently made. A young Cowichan man, in conversation with one of the teaching Sisters, expressed his resentment of the white man's domination of his people.

"Yes," the sister replied. "But you know the whites did it for your good."

"Oh, no," he replied. "They did it for themselves."

But whatever view is taken of the role of the Sisters of St. Ann, their good intentions and impact on the history of the Pacific Northwest are indisputable. The growth that had begun in the 1860s continued for the next century, bringing Catholic faith and opportunities for education to both native and white children throughout the area. And just as diverse events of the nineteenth century created a climate favourable to the growth of such an organization, it was inevitable that new changes would someday remove it from prominence. The beautifully restored academy is now occupied by the provincial Ministry of Education. Parts of the building have been preserved as a memorial to the great work that started there, and the Log Cabin School is tucked safely into a space behind the Royal British Columbia Museum a few blocks further west.

Surviving members of the order maintain a number of smaller buildings throughout Victoria. I found Sister Margaret Cantwell in one of them. She's a tiny, conservatively dressed woman with a pale, gentle face.

"We're still a teaching community," Sister Margaret says. "Even without the school and the classrooms, we find many opportunities to teach." She describes their work in a variety of individual ministries that include counselling, charity work, writing, and music. In addition to her tasks as archivist for the order, Sister Margaret is a writer. She's produced numerous articles and a book about the history of the Sisters of St. Ann.

Because the order no longer attracts young women to its ranks, the future is uncertain. But whatever it holds, St. Ann's Academy will always be there as a reminder of the sisters' place in history and the selfless devotion of those who started the work. "It's a matter of faith, prayer, and doing God's will," says Sister Margaret. "That's our commitment." ◆

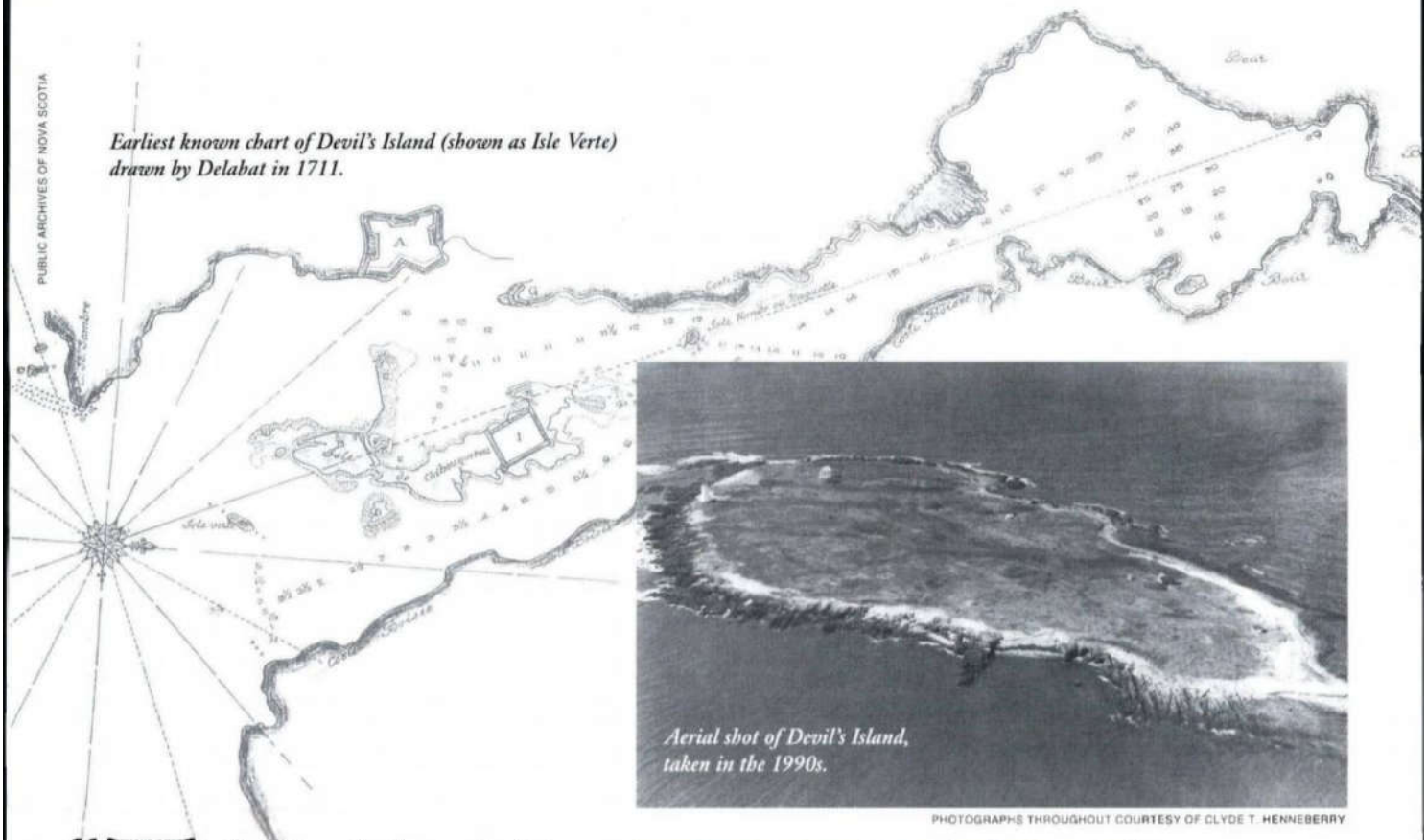
Philip Jensen is a freelance writer living in Victoria, B.C. He is a retired school principal and an amateur historian.

A feud raged between the Horns and the Henneberrys for 130 years. The issue: who was rightful owner to Devil's Island? Though no victor would be claimed, a tiny community shaped by the forces of wind and water would flourish on this barren island in Halifax Harbour. A look at those who passed through, lived on, and left this now-abandoned outpost.

Devil's Island

Latitude 44°35'N, Longitude 63°28'W

by Kate Langan



PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF NOVA SCOTIA

Earliest known chart of Devil's Island (shown as Isle Verte) drawn by Delabat in 1711.

Aerial shot of Devil's Island, taken in the 1990s.

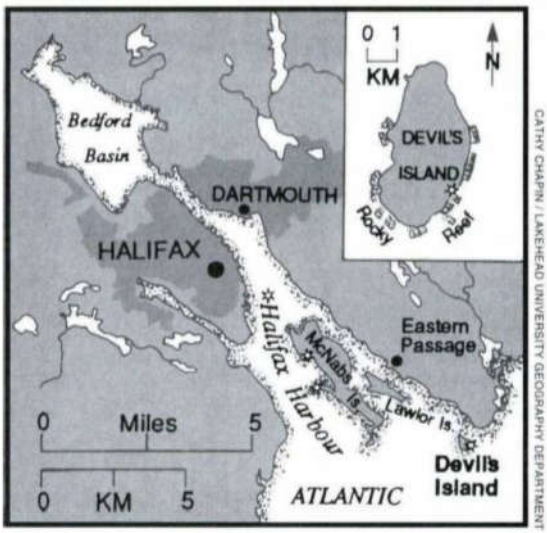
PHOTOGRAPHS THROUGHOUT COURTESY OF CLYDE T. HENNEBERRY

"The Henneberry family were the first ones there and the last ones off, just about!" says Young Ben Henneberry, now of Eastern Passage, Nova Scotia.

Young Ben Henneberry, so called to distinguish him from his grandfather, Mr. Ben, was born and grew up on Devil's Island on the south-eastern lip of Halifax Harbour. He was a fisherman, like his ancestors. His friends and family were fishermen. Wives and children worked right alongside the men, carrying on a tradition of drying and salting fish first recorded in 1698 by the French, who had arrived a half century earlier, drawn by the rich fishing grounds.

The French knew the 27-acre island that only rises 4.6 metres above the waves by a different name: a chart by Delabat (1711), who was the engineer officer of the former French garrison at Port Royal in the Annapolis Valley, showed Isle Verte (Green Island) at the harbour mouth. But 40 years later this had changed: a fragment of a survey dated 1752 showed the island as Rouss's Island (commonly called Devil's Island). Legend has it called Wood Island at one time for its abundant growth of trees – trees that have not been in evidence since 1802.

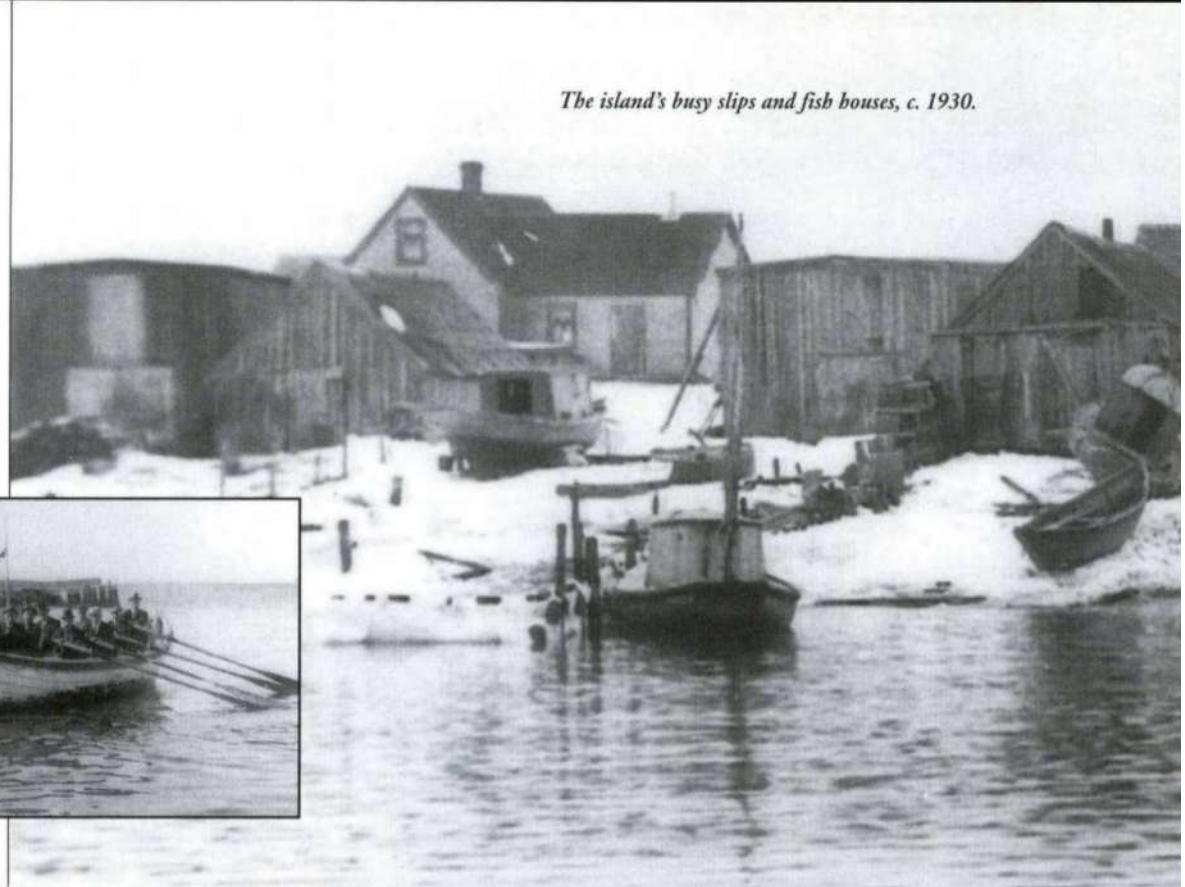
Many tales have been told of how Devil's Island got its name. H.W. Hewitt, in the *Dartmouth Patriot* at the turn of the century, told a popular story of some Halifax sportsmen who were compelled to remain on the island for several days because of the weather. When asked where they had been, they said, "they did not know unless it was the Devil's island."



CATHY CHAPIN / LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

Another, better-known story, recounted in 1988 in Halifax's *Chronicle Herald*, is of old Casper Henneberry who, many years ago,

> *invited some friends for a party on the island. During the festivities, Henneberry went outside for a few moments then came back looking white and shaken. He told his friends that his time was up; he'd seen the Devil "in the form of a halibut." The next day he was rowing back to the island from Halifax. He was*



The island's busy slips and fish houses, c. 1930.

Lifeboat crew, with Ben Henneberry as the coxswain: "Had the Devil's Island crew been near, the men would have probably been saved."

Mr. and Mrs. Ben Henneberry, March 1937.

found drowned, his head and shoulders hanging over the side of the boat.

Both these stories, and others, stretch the imagination, but the truth is vividly mundane beside them. Actually, a Frenchman whose name was Deval or Devol once owned the island, gave it his name, and it is the corruption of this that we now use.

The island would later pass into the hands of Captain John Rouss, as part of a large land parcel including what is now Eastern Passage and Hartlen's Point. A New Englander who had spent time as a privateersman when it was an honourable and lucrative profession, Rouss captained the ship that, among other things, carried General James Wolfe to the siege of Louisbourg Fortress – the success of which made Nova Scotia unequivocally a British Territory.

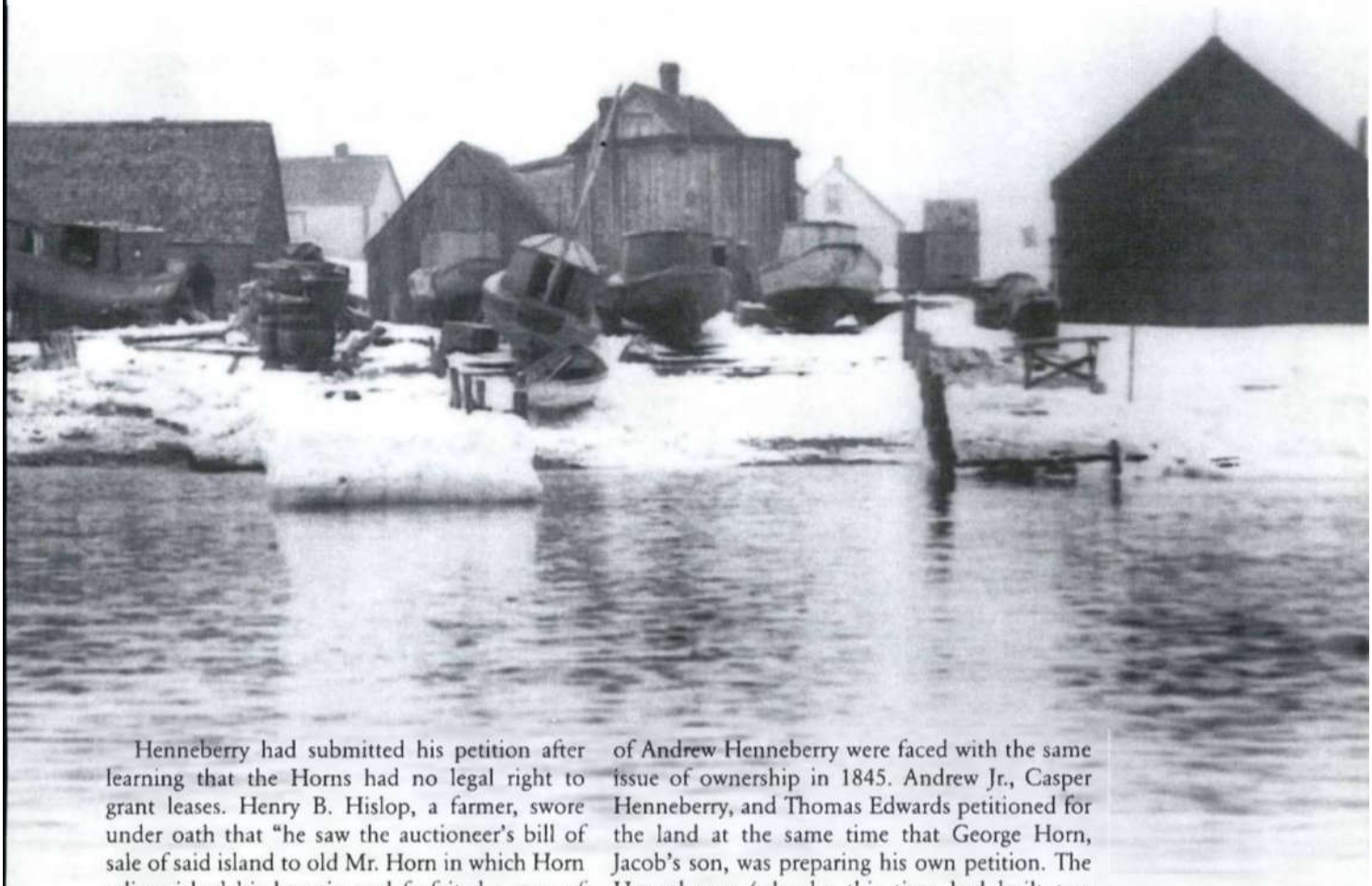
Ownership did not rest with Captain Rouss, however. Eventually, a man named Jacob Horn Jr., who had fought for the British in Quebec under General Wolfe (and reportedly snowshoed from there to Nova Scotia after the defeat of the French), bought it in 1802. He grazed his sheep and cattle on the island, and in 1824, leased a portion to the family who would become the first true settlers – Andrew Henneberry, his wife, and four children.

Although he had leased the land from Jacob Horn Jr., two years later Henneberry petitioned for an escheat of the original grant. This was the beginning of a long feud over ownership between the Horns and the Henneberrys, but it continued a struggle that was more than 70 years old.

Wrote Titus Smith in 1825:

> *Capt. Rouss had a promise of the island but that at a time when his ship was absent from Halifax ... the Hon. Richard Bulkeley procured title to it which caused some disagreement between him and Capt. Rouss when he returned to this station ... That some time before the death of Mr. Bulkeley's son Freke he employed the late Hon. Charles Hill to sell it at auction, when it was bought by the late Jacob Horn, Junior, for $100, a small part of which was paid down ... that Kay the Pilot who occupied the island as tenant to Mr. Bulkeley, and who had bid against Horn, threatened that if Horn would not let him have it he would set fire to it and kill all the wood on the island.* That Horn then refused to pay more money until he should be secured from damage from Kay – does not know how this was settled, nor whether Horn received a deed, but known that from that time he held the island and that once when some persons applied for a grant of it Mr. Hill went with Horn to the office and certified that Horn had bought it from Mr. Bulkeley by his agency – Henneberry hired the island from Horn.*

*This accounts for the inappropriateness of the name "Wood Island!"



Henneberry had submitted his petition after learning that the Horns had no legal right to grant leases. Henry B. Hislop, a farmer, swore under oath that "he saw the auctioneer's bill of sale of said island to old Mr. Horn in which Horn relinquished his bargain and forfeited a sum of money incurred by the same." In another statement, "George Ray [*sic.* The record is likely referring to George Kay] one of his Majesty's Pilots of Halifax, ... swore that he had given permission to McGuire to settle on Devil's Island as the Horns had no possession of it whatever."

Andrew Henneberry was a fisherman who made his living catching, salting, and selling fish to the markets in Halifax, but his life was much more than this:

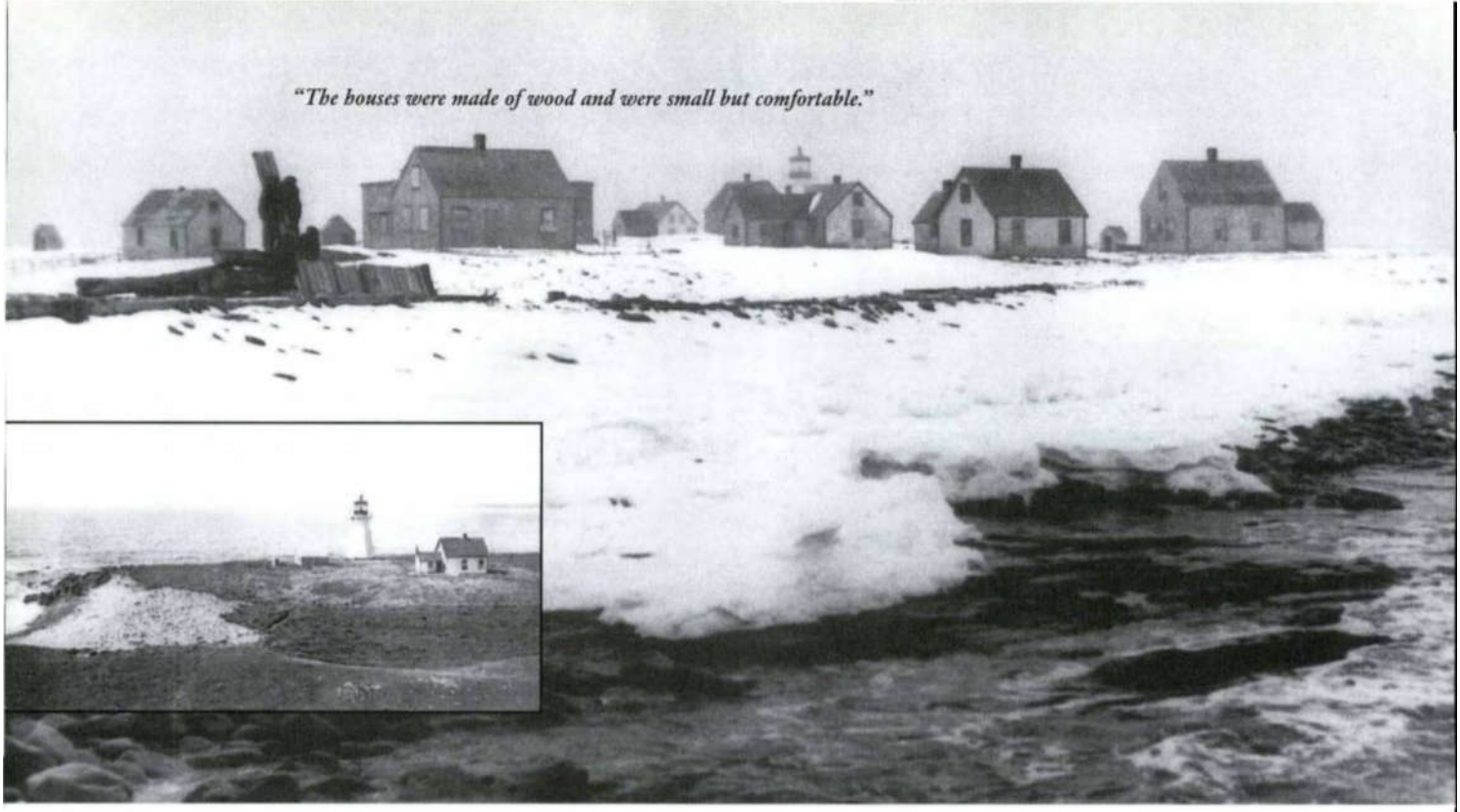
> *Petitioner is a native of this Province has a wife and five children ... is a very poor man and he with great exertion maintained his family upon it and brought some of it into very good cultivation. ... Said island is an assembly of rocks and a very little of it can be cultivated. ... The greater portion of said island is of a sterile nature.*

All this did not resolve the issue of land ownership, and the fight between the Horns and the Henneberrys continued, with the Horns living in Eastern Passage and Henneberrys remaining on the island. With the death of their father, mother, and brother in a tragic boating accident on Christmas Eve in 1841, the sons and son-in-law of Andrew Henneberry were faced with the same issue of ownership in 1845. Andrew Jr., Casper Henneberry, and Thomas Edwards petitioned for the land at the same time that George Horn, Jacob's son, was preparing his own petition. The Henneberrys (who by this time had built two houses and cleared six acres for cultivation), stated that Andrew Henneberry Sr. had purchased the property from John Horn (Jacob's other son) in 1830, making them the rightful owners.

This round of petitions didn't settle the dispute over ownership either–neither the Horns nor the Henneberrys received a grant. Nonetheless, the Henneberrys continued to live there, their claim to the land affirmed by their presence. They were joined by others, and the barren island evolved into a unique community.

Mr. Thomas Edwards was married to Andrew Henneberry's daughter, Margaret, and had come to Devil's Island from Pope's Harbour sometime between 1824 and 1845. Shortly after, his brothers joined him, so there were several Edwards on the island in 1845.

Another settler to the island was Benjamin Faulkner, a man of German descent who moved to Devil's Island in 1863 to become the island's third lighthouse keeper and, when the lifeboat was installed, the first coxswain. The lighthouse had been built in 1852 at the request of the merchants, traders, and mariners of Halifax, replacing a wooden day beacon. Another was built in 1877. Six of Faulkner's family members were to hold



The southwest lighthouse, built in 1852, and lightkeepers house, both now demolished.

the position of lighthouse keeper between 1863 and 1944, when the 1852 light was torn down. Between 1949 and 1954, Henneberrys held the position of keeper of the remaining light, Young Ben being one of them. In 1954, Mr. Charles MacDonald took over the now-nonresidential job, rowing over daily from Eastern Passage. He was the last of 115 years of light keepers. In 1967, the light was automated.

The ownership issue arose again in 1963 when several newspapers reported that a local businessman, Bill Mont, had bought Devil's Island at a tax sale for $600. By that time the island was only inhabited by ghosts. The 20 or so families who had lived there were gone, their houses derelict. One hundred and eighteen years are almost completely missing; only two articles written by H.W. Hewitt at the turn of the century, and notes by Dr. Helen Creighton, the Maritime's late, eminent folklorist, bridge this period. The Hewitt articles give a colourful picture of the men from the island:

> *In 1898, the Brig Irma went ashore. ... Another lifeboat was on the spot but the crew would not venture in, so the Devil's Island crew had to make two trips. The first trip out four were taken off and put in the other lifeboat. Then the crew again risked their lives and brought off the remainder of the crew. While they were taking the rescued people to Halifax James DeYoung and his son (both residents of Devil's Island) perished on Thrum Cap without an effort on the part of the other lifeboat to save them. Had the Devil's Island boat been near the men would have probably been saved.*

This account, written in 1901, also tells of there being 18 houses on the 27-acre island, where 50 years before there had only been three.

In 1928, Dr. Creighton began collecting songs from around the province. On the urging of Enos Hartlen of Hartlen's Point, she made her way to Devil's Island to meet Mr. Ben Henneberry. She described what she found in her book, *A Life in Folklore* (McGraw Hill, 1975):

> *The houses were made of wood and were small but comfortable, with the kitchen the focal point.*
>
> *By early evening on the day of our first visit to the island, we were still at the Faulkners', nourished by homemade bread, strawberry jam, and tea. ... We strolled along the narrow footpaths to the boats. On such a night most people had wandered towards the little harbour formed by two breakwaters and were watching the sun setting over Citadel Hill, ten miles away in Halifax. Some men sat on a log, and I inquired if one might be Mr. Ben. A short stocky man stood up and I asked if he would sing. He agreed readily and began the long sad tale of the children lost in the woods near Dartmouth. ... Then more joined us, moving quietly lest they disrupt the poignant tale. Like wraiths they slipped between fish houses and sat on barrels, lobster pots, or wherever they could find a perch ... they were torn*

between sympathy for the lost children and pride in their singer.

The songs gathered by Dr. Creighton would later appear in her book, *Songs and Ballads from Nova Scotia* (Dent and Sons 1932).

Young Ben and his family were the last permanent residents of Devil's Island:

There was nothing much there except fishing. I was about 20 when I started fishing. Then, there were 18 families. There used to be two breakwaters, but they deteriorated and there was no place to keep the boats safe from the southerly storms, so most of them [the fishermen] moved to Eastern Passage. [The breakwaters] were government wharves, but they stopped fixing them up.

I was 40 when I left ... in '54. I was the only one out there. I had a small family and I had to leave to send them to school. [The school board] wouldn't send a schoolteacher. The last one came four or five years before I left, but they wouldn't let her live alone and we had nine children, some infant[s], and she said there were too many children and she wouldn't be able to do her work. So that was the last teacher.

His sister, Mrs. Joan Oakley, who had left in 1942 when she was 17, had fond memories to recount:

The cod were salted in puncheons. ["No one would buy fresh fish, and lobsters were used as fertilizer on your garden," Young Ben told me.] They would be laid, tails in, in one layer, and salted and another layer, right to the top, then after a while they would be put on flakes and left. We'd cover them with canvas weighted down with rocks all around to keep the rain off. The women would turn them two or three times a day. It would take three weeks to a month to salt them, then we would take them to Halifax to sell. We made cod-liver oil. It was our only medicine. I loved it. I would sneak it whenever I could and then when my mother would ask where it was I would just shrug, all innocent.

But living on Devil's Island was hard work. There was no electricity. Laundry would come in off the line frozen stiff. Groceries, except those provided from the vegetable gardens, or livestock, would have to be brought from Halifax. Wood, to burn in the stoves, or for boat building, barrel making, and the many other things made from it, would have to be boated over from Eastern Passage. Death was a constant presence, as the graveyard at Saint Andrew's Catholic Church in Eastern Passage shows, but there was a tremendous closeness, born of a shared need to survive.

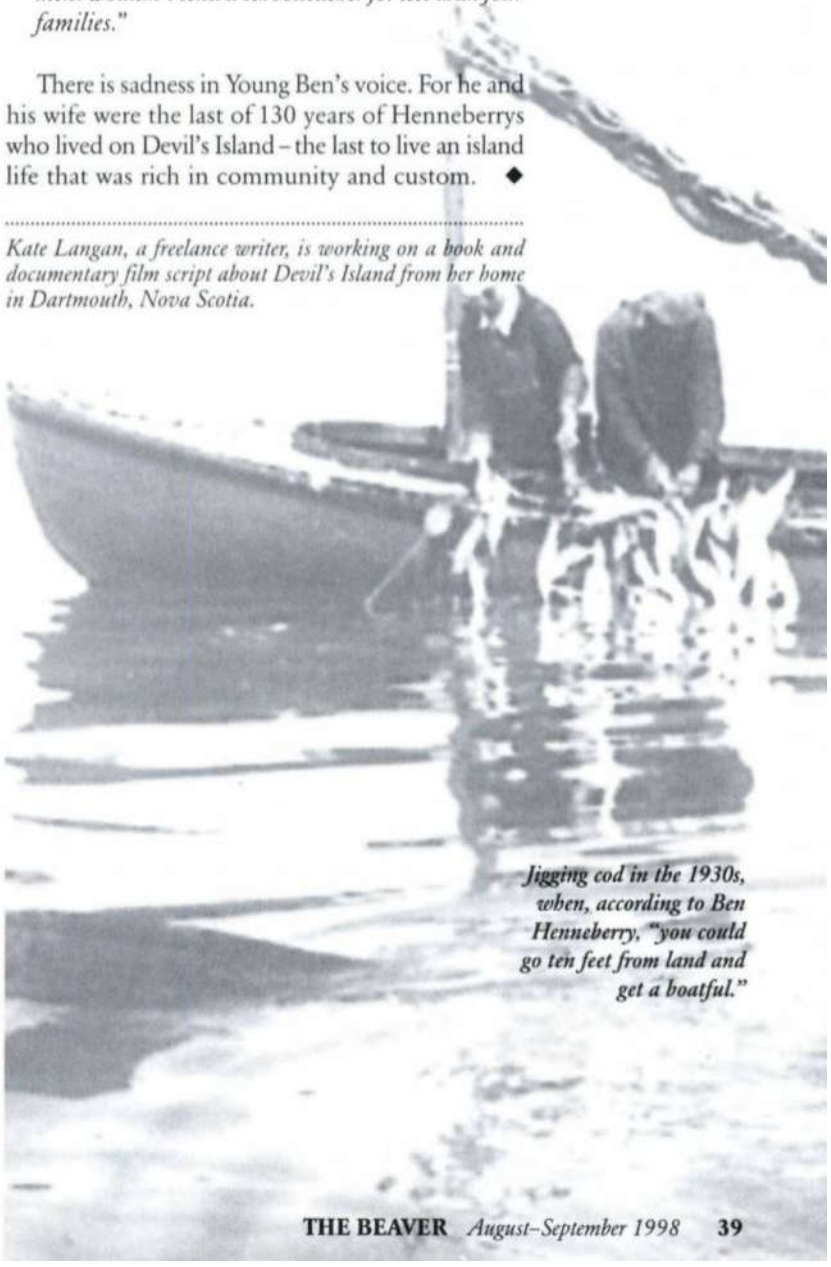
The Second World War marked a turning point for life on the island. With the scare of U-boat attacks against the convoys of ships using Halifax Harbour uppermost in everyone's minds, the Canadian Department of National Defence urged all residents to leave. It appears this is one reason the island is now deserted.

Young Ben Henneberry has another view:

I don't believe anybody left because anybody asked them to. ... A lot of young people left to join the service and that left only the older people and they were getting tired, so they left for Eastern Passage. Anyway, a lot had given up fishing. There were still plenty of fish, but you couldn't get any money for them, and they were working on the shore front and it was easier to get a job on the mainland. People moved to where the work was. ... the last few families left, same as me, in the early 1950s, because the government wouldn't send a schoolteacher for less than four families."

There is sadness in Young Ben's voice. For he and his wife were the last of 130 years of Henneberrys who lived on Devil's Island – the last to live an island life that was rich in community and custom. ◆

Kate Langan, a freelance writer, is working on a book and documentary film script about Devil's Island from her home in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

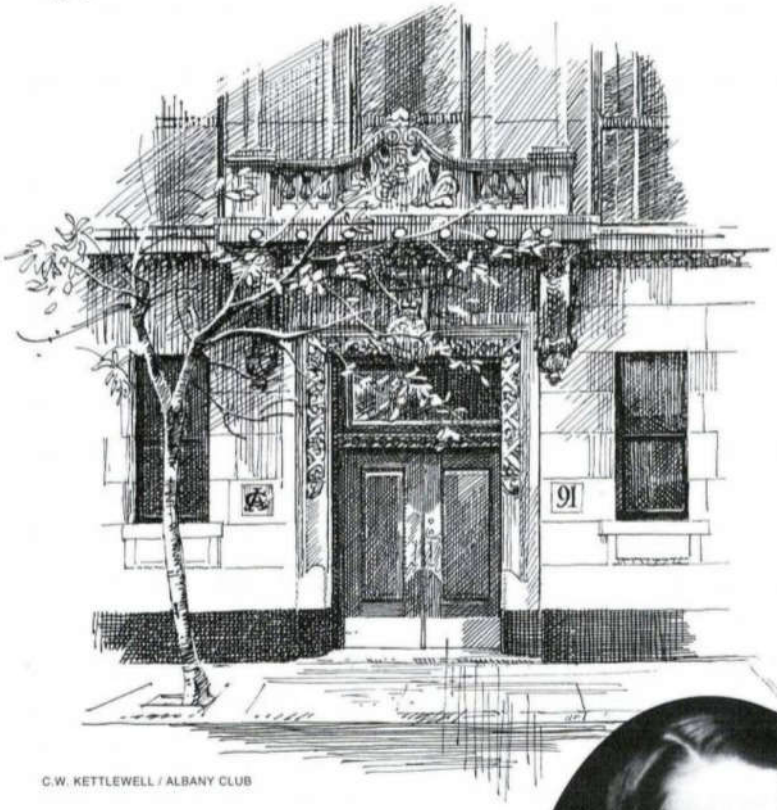


Jigging cod in the 1930s, when, according to Ben Henneberry, "you could go ten feet from land and get a boatful."

Club Feat

Over the last 100 years, the Albany Club, the last political club in Canada, has rolled with the political punches and survived. And while it's clear that this former all-male enclave of cigars and brandy has changed, the secret to its longevity lies in its Conservative roots.

by Joe Martin



C.W. KETTLEWELL / ALBANY CLUB

The Honourable Alexander Morris, founding president of the Albany.

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF MANITOBA

In August 1998, the Albany Club of Toronto will celebrate its 100th anniversary at 91 King Street East. The significance of the club's longevity lies not so much in its location as in the fact that it's the last of a dying breed – a political club. Though common in Canada in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (indeed, Liberal and Union Nationale Clubs were still going in Quebec up to the 1960s) a political club with its own well-appointed premises is a rarity today in Canada.

Clubs – gentlemen's clubs as they were called until recently – were a peculiarly English institution. Originating in the seventeenth century, their original purpose was for gaming and gossip. From that they evolved to politics, and from there, to business. From London, they spread to the old British Empire (including the United States), then to the new British Empire (including India, Australia, and Canada), and eventually to the European continent and South America. All clubs have essentially the same purpose – to provide a meeting place for like-minded people.

The Founding of the Club in 1882

In 1882, there was a federal election in Canada, one particularly important for Sir John A. Macdonald and his Liberal Conservatives: they had to establish that their reelection in 1878 was not an accident, and that they had truly placed the 1873 Pacific scandal over the CPR behind them. The battle for the important southwestern part of Ontario was centred in Toronto, and a natural campaign base – such as a residential political club – would have been ideal.

By late October, a matter of months after Sir John A. led the Tories to triumphant reelection, his supporters had established the Albany Club at its first location, 75 Bay Street. A site inauspiciously referred to at the time as "Mrs. Dunlop's tenement," over the years it has acquired a much greater cachet (today it is the location of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce head office complex).

The founding president was the Honourable Alexander Morris, M.P.P., who had worked for Macdonald in Kingston. One of the first to call for the creation of Canada, Morris had served as an honest broker between Macdonald and George Brown when negotiations threatened to break up in 1864. He was later a member of the original Confederation cabinet.

In 1871, Morris went west to Manitoba as its first chief justice; he later became lieutenant governor of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories. It was in that

capacity he negotiated the Indian treaties covering the area from Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains. After moving back east and winning election to the provincial parliament of Ontario, Morris was serving as house leader when he became the first club president in 1882 – and in his devotion to the party epitomized the typical club member.

In naming the club, the members turned to the Royal Family for inspiration. They found it in the fourth son and eighth child of Queen Victoria, Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany. Not only had the duke's marriage earlier that year attracted a great deal of attention in the colonial press, his sister, Princess Louise, was the wife of Canada's governor general, the Marquis of Lorne. Two years earlier, in 1880, the duke had visited his sister in Canada and met Sir John A. and other prominent Conservatives. His selection as the royal personage whose name the club would bear seemed most fitting in those days of deep reverence for all things British and royal.

The Early Years, 1882-1891

These were highly political times, and the Albany's bylaws and rules put it very plainly: "No person shall become a Member of the Club unless a *Conservative*." The defining word was italicized, leaving no room for doubt.

The early years were successful years for the club. And these were good years for the federal Conservatives, with Sir John A. leading his party to two more electoral victories, in 1887 and in 1891. The prime minister had been a member since 1883, along with such luminaries as W.R. Meredith, the Ontario Conservative leader, and Sir Alexander Campbell, minister of justice and a future lieutenant governor of Ontario.

At the beginning of 1889, two future prime ministers (the Honourable John Thompson, then minister of justice, and the Honourable Charles Tupper, then Canadian high commissioner to the United Kingdom) and the future first Conservative premier of Ontario, James Pliny Whitney, joined the club. At the same time, Sir John A. and Meredith agreed to become honorary president and vice-president, respectively. Later that year, the Albany moved to new and grander premises at 34 Colborne Street. Yet the fortunes of the club naturally followed those of the Conservative party. They would take a downturn two years later that would continue for some time.

The Difficult Years, 1891–1897

The year 1891 began well. On January 13, the club held a dinner in honour of Sir John A.'s birthday as a pretext for the launch of his next campaign. This election was to be Sir John A.'s last hurrah, a victory won on the slogan of "The Old Flag, The Old Policy, The Old Leader." But it was not a victory to be savoured for long. "The Old Leader" died in June, just a few months after the election.

The years that followed would prove difficult both for the Conservative Party and for its natural home in Toronto, the Albany Club. Sir John A. was succeeded as prime minister by Senator John Abbott, the first prime minister from the Senate and a recent mayor of Montreal. Thompson, Bowell, and Tupper (who were club members) followed Abbott (who was not) in quick succession.

But these would be the final glory days for the federal Conservative Party. In 1896, Laurier's Liberals soundly defeated the Conservatives. It was an election that forever changed the political face of Canada, as the Liberals became the new governing party.

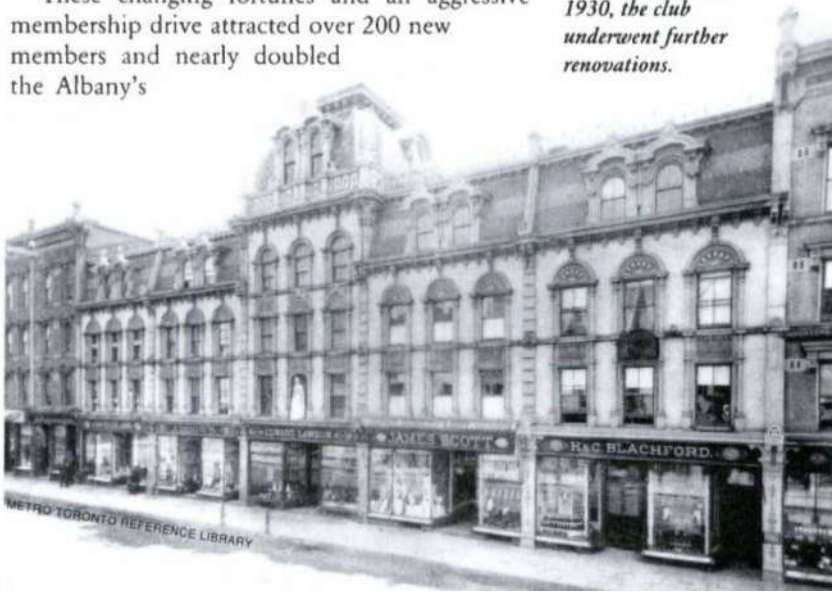
For the first time in the club's 14-year history, Conservatives were out of power in Ottawa and were yet to hold power in Ontario. It showed in club membership: in 1897, only 16 new members joined, down from 28 the previous year.

Into the Twentieth Century

As the historian Arnold Toynbee has noted, every great challenge elicits a great response. That is exactly what happened with the Albany Club, as both external and internal forces played their part.

When James Pliny Whitney took over the provincial party in 1896, there had never been a Conservative government in Ontario. In 1905, he broke the Liberal's 33-year stranglehold on Ontario and led his party to four successive majority governments, establishing the most successful electoral dynasty of twentieth-century Canada – more successful than those of the Liberal parties of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, or even the Liberal Party of Canada.

These changing fortunes and an aggressive membership drive attracted over 200 new members and nearly doubled the Albany's



The section of King Street known as Victorian Row, c. 1890. The Albany would later occupy the central unit and one to the right. In 1930, the club underwent further renovations.

membership. This provided the necessary financial resources for one more move from Colborne Street to fine new premises at 91 King St. East, which is still the club's home.

As the nineteenth century rolled into the twentieth, the club shifted from being a federally dominated club to one more provincially oriented, a natural evolution given the fate of the Conservative Party. This change was barely discernible to outsiders, however. A *Toronto Star* columnist noted in a 1921 edition of the paper: "Nobody but an archaeologist accustomed to ferreting out old important things in secret places ever could discover the Albany Club. ... A common citizen moping past to catch a Church streetcar may not dream that just inside a window are Sir Henry Drayton and Sir Edward Kemp [both cabinet ministers in the Borden government], who do not go to the Albany to get rid of time."

The Albany today: former prime minister Joe Clark and Ontario premier Mike Harris.

As the century progressed, other factors took their toll, not just on the Albany, but on all private clubs, including the Liberal Ontario Club located on Wellington Street. For one thing, new provincial legislation had been passed that permitted hotels and restaurants to serve liquor with meals. This eliminated an important competitive advantage private clubs had enjoyed. On top of that, some argued that the Albany Club suffered a locational disadvantage – its address, east of Yonge Street, put it too far from the heart of the Toronto's commercial action west of Yonge.

But the real reason for its decline in membership was that at this halfway mark of the twentieth century, the Albany Club – like the Ontario Club – had lost its raison d'être. Both had increasingly become clubs without a political purpose, simply places where members gathered to eat and drink, but without the old commitment to the political parties of their choice. Though still nominally tied to party politics (after all, former prime minister Arthur Meighen dined at the Albany every day, at the same table, with the same three friends), the old political purpose – the old political fire – seemed to be missing.

But two members stepped into the breach. David J. Walker, K.C., (who would become M.P. for Rosedale in 1957, and later Diefenbaker's right-hand man) and publisher Roy H. Thomson (who would become press baron Lord Thomson of Fleet) proposed a simple solution. The club must revive its original purpose of being a *political* club. Over the next five years, both served as club president (from 1949–52 and 1952–54 respectively) and accomplished this goal. It helped, of course, that the provincial Conservatives were now firmly in power in Ontario, while at the federal level, the party was showing new life under former Ontario premier George Drew.

One Hundred Years at 91 King St. East

In September, the club celebrates its centennial in its current location with an exhibit of pictures of "the way it was." There will also be a tableau on King St. East, with a few club members, in period costume, arriving by horse-drawn landau. The players will represent key figures of 1898, such as federal Conservative leader Sir Charles Tupper and Toronto mayor George Shaw. Each will deliver a short address.

The celebration will be an appropriate way to mark the continuous presence in downtown Toronto of an active political club, likely the last of its kind in Canada – and one of the few remaining in the world. The Conservative Party in general, and the Albany Club in particular, have had more than their share of ups and downs in the last century. However, as it looks forward to the future, the club's leadership is sure that the "dear old Albany" will, for many years to come, be a meeting place for like-minded individuals. ◆

A management consultant, Joe Martin is also chairman of Canada's National History Society and of the Heritage Committee of the Albany Club.

An Orkney Homecoming

In June 1999
there will be a celebration in the Orkney Islands of the shared heritage with Canada.
The history of the islands; the connections with the Hudson's Bay Company; the shared musical heritage; and the connections with the First Nations will all be a part of this event.
If you are of Orcadian descent or simply fascinated with the islands and their history and would like to join us, please contact us at

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Preserving a maritime legacy

BY PETER STEVEN

ALONE IN THE NIGHT
Lighthouses of Georgian Bay, Manitoulin Island and the North Channel
By Andrea Gutsche, Barbara Chisholm, and Russell Floren.
Lynx Images, Toronto, Ontario, 1996.
Book: 292 pp., illus. $34.95 paper
Videotape: (72 min. VHS), $29.95
Both: $49.95

Once, not so long ago, a lighthouse was considered a sign of civilized society. Now, in Canada, these incredible buildings get torn down and discarded, their potential historic and aesthetic value ignored. This richly detailed, beautifully produced book, with accompanying videotape, tries to rescue fragments of that history. It also makes a strong case for preserving the remaining lights.

The authors of *Alone in the Night* have assembled a vast range of material, including hundreds of enchanting photos of lighthouses, fog plants, machinery, ships, work, and working people, showing lightkeeping, salvaging, fishing, and construction, plus architectural drawings rarely seen in standard history books. Thorough research characterizes the entire project. Material from the smallest local history societies, such as the Little Schoolhouse Museum in South Baymouth, Manitoulin Island, to the National Archives of Canada, is strengthened by many of the lightkeepers' personal collections of letters, records, and photos. The text deftly weaves personal, economic, technological, and maritime histories.

Georgian Bay's lighthouse histories began in 1858 with the construction of six magnificent structures called Imperial Towers. These tall stone beacons with detached keeper's houses answered the need for safer shipping. Throughout the late nineteenth century, railways thrust north from Toronto to the upper Great Lakes, striving for new links across the water to the West. But the waves of Georgian Bay proved especially hazardous: they "do not roll, but crest sharply." More shipping meant more wrecks, and the lure of greater profits created fierce pressure to sail even "when prudence would have suggested otherwise." Later disasters and frenzied shipping, shortly after Confederation and in the 1890s, forced the government to construct dozens of new lighthouses in more modest, though no less elegant, wooden buildings. Soon, every significant hazard, shoal, and island around Georgian Bay and Manitoulin Island, from Cape Croker to Janet Head, boasted a light, constantly maintained.

But lightkeeping was a tough job. Working conditions proved gruelling, and the season stretched from the ice breakup in late March to mid-December. Lightkeepers recount being plucked from the tiny islands by Coast Guard tenders at the last possible moment, as the ice was moving in, and "winter seized the lake." Cove Island's second keeper ran out of food. One particularly bleak spot in the Western Islands was dubbed Little Alcatraz. "Whereas in the States," say the authors, "two to three men were appointed to tend a light, in Canada, the keeper's family was often expected to provide the assistance." One keeper reminds us that he and his family were "totally responsible, no excuses." The government supplied a small sailboat with no motor for trips to the mainland.

At times these families achieved heroic success, not only in keeping lights burning and fog machines sounding, but by saving lives. George Collins, who worked at both Cove Island and Nottawasaga lights, saved 52 people over his career. The authors recount many such heroic and tragic stories – drownings, accidents, tales of those who tried to overwinter and didn't make it. A matter-of-fact entry from the Cove Island lightkeeper's journal of 1881 reveals another death: "Sept. 25 – Recovered the body of Captain Tripp who was drowned on the 10th – sewed him up in Canvas and buried him on the west side of this Island. Wind slight s.w. – starry night." At other times history betrays less noble deeds. In 1882, the keeper at Lonely Island was charged with robbing the dead from the wreck of the *Asia*, a large passenger ship that broke up and washed onto its shores.

The videotape version of *Alone in the Night* provides a different, equally fascinating focus, and tells a different series of stories about Georgian Bay lightkeeping. Throughout, the viewer experiences a series of visual relationships, situating the lighthouses within a vast, often forbidding, landscape. These images give a visceral sense of the power and danger of Georgian Bay.

Here also the producers have gathered an impressive range of photographic materials, including aerial and underwater photography, visits to the sites, and richly textured archival materials. Especially valuable is the 1929 amateur film of the Red Rock keeper being picked up for the winter by the government supply tender. There's also marvellous Super 8 footage of families and work scenes, some shot from small planes. The photography emphasizes tranquil yet foreboding settings, often a juxtaposition of small waves and large clouds building in the distance. A particularly good sequence illustrates the famous 1882 hurricane and wreck of the *Asia*, the worst maritime disaster in Georgian Bay history.

The tape is distinguished by an effective editing style that employs staple devices of many history films – dissolves and superimpositions. As old photos showing buildings, equipment, and people dissolve into new scenes, we seem to view the history vanishing before our eyes. Many of the dissolves

are edited to make the most of graphic matches and continuities from one shot to the next. At times this can slather the melancholy a bit thick. But I felt a constant tension between the continuities of place and the fits and starts of human habitation. Unlike most past-to-present photo montages, these scenes dissolve from human presence back to nature. Lighthouses and surrounding buildings have not been buried under shopping malls and highways but in most cases have returned to bush, rubble, and deserted beach.

Unfortunately, the visual richness of the tape is not matched by its soundtrack. The music includes neo-Gaelic fiddle and guitar, accompanied by piano and synthesizer, a generally pleasing but somewhat flat and lulling effect. More variation would have sharpened the focus and drawn viewers to other specific details. The narration offers a rather dry and ponderous "voice of god," occasionally joined, oddly, by a second voice, equally omniscient. The first narrator picks up echoes of a nineteenth-century theatrical lecturer, which may work on some level, but strikes me as simply old-fashioned and condescending for modern ears. Why not use narration from one of the lightkeepers?

My favourite shot from *Alone in the Night*, which appears in several variations, places the viewer inside an abandoned lighthouse room, looking out through a window, past a shingle beach, and beyond, to the lake. The window glass is long gone. Weathered paint on the inside window frame has cracked and peeled (though the red paint on the outside frame still shows). Immediately outside, the soft green remnants of a lawn still hang on, but far out over the water, Georgian Bay storm clouds are on the move. I feel the tranquility of the spot, and simultaneously, the danger of the lake. This tension between tranquility and danger is matched by the twin emotions of melancholy over lives gone by and the insistent presence of the weather. It's an evocative thread weaving through the entire tape – the historical continuity of wild wind and waves – a history of weather.

Alone in the Night contains an unusual amount of detail for a popular tape, and 72 minutes could be long for young viewers. But I applaud the makers for their serious approach and confidence in the audience – telling the story with the kind of substance and historical nuance that it deserves. Gutsche, Chisholm, and Floren have attempted something unique in creating and marketing the book and video together; they have contributed a fine piece of work to a growing tradition of serious, yet popular Canadian history.

Peter Steven is a historian, writer, and teacher of film history. He lives in Toronto.

Canada at sea: A naval medley

BY W.A.B. DOUGLAS

A NATION' S NAVY:
In Quest of Canadian Naval Identity
By Michael Hadley, Rob Huebert, Fred W. Crickard, (eds).
McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston and Montreal, 1996.
460 pp., illus. $49.95 hardcover.

Ask any sailor in the Canadian navy if he or she ever doubted its Canadian identity, and the answer would likely be a definite "no." The British historian Michael Howard, invited to comment on the conference papers from which this book is drawn, asked those present what they would do with such an identity once they found it. Our navel gazing does puzzle visitors, but the fact is, it tells us quite a lot about ourselves, and actually *finding* the Canadian naval identity might deprive us of a useful exercise. The subtitle for this book is therefore not inappropriate, yet it bespeaks an inferiority complex for which there is no justification.

The collection represents the healthy state of Canadian naval scholarship. As explained in the introduction, there have been three major historical conferences devoted to the past, present, and future of the Canadian navy. The first two, in 1980 and 1985, were for the most part the product of academics. In 1993 (following a model provided by the postwar German navy's annual historical discussions), organizers deliberately sought out serving personnel. Thus, of 21 authors, six are serving in the navy, one in the air force, one in the reserves of the communications branch, and one in the Royal Australian Navy. Five are former naval or military persons and only seven are practising historians or political scientists without service affiliation. By no means a light book, *A Nation's Navy* is, all the same, blessed with good writing, sound research, and a small but exceptionally good selection of illustrations.

The theme running through each section is what Michael Hadley, in his well-written survey of the navy's public face, calls "the complex and not always happy relationship between the nation and its navy." Leading scholars in the field, Hadley, Barry Gough, Marc Milner and Roger Sarty, have solid contributions, largely based on recent publications but including some interesting new research. Rear-Admiral Fred Crickard, always known as a cerebral sailor, and Commander James Goldrick, Royal Australian Navy, a highly regarded sea officer as well as a respected historian, emphasize the value of balanced fleets with control of territorial waters and the ability to employ force at sea "for purposes regarded as nationally important." Parallels between the Australian and Canadian navies are noted. Blue water policy is a "good thing." Michael Hennessy, in a perceptive account of fleet

replacement in the early 1960s, argues that Lester Pearson's Liberal cabinet in 1964, by drastic reductions of expenditure, imposed the antisubmarine warfare mission on a navy that had already won the case for a general purpose fleet, and "rendered the RCN a sop to Canada's allies." Read in conjunction with the papers by Commodore Jan Drent and Commander Peter Haydon about the immediate postwar years, this provides an illuminating and controversial interpretation of postwar Canadian naval policy. Lieutenant-Commander Richard H. Gimblett, discussing the "lesser" navies in the Gulf War, concludes that Canadian naval commanders in the Gulf carried out a skillful balancing act, undertook a leading role in Coalition operations and "gave substance to the definition of a Canadian naval identity." Well supported by the evidence, this interpretation is based on new research and adds a new page to our naval history.

New research is not confined to recent events. Lieutenant-Colonel Catherine Allan's account of the Operational Intelligence Centre in Ottawa during the Second World War stems from massive investigation of previously closed documents. Lieutenant-Commander Doug Maclean has a refreshing essay on Canadian antisubmarine doctrine in the Second World War, and several other contributors have turned up new evidence about the social history of the navy, practically virgin territory. Although the papers presented here are exploratory rather than definitive, they open up a wealth of possibilities. Lieutenant-Commander William Glover's slightly contentious piece entitled "Royal Canadian or Royal Colonial Navy?" argues that failure to base policy on the country's own political activity is the hallmark of a colonial service.

The navy has, of course, drawn important nourishment from its colonial roots, as sub-lieutenants Graeme Tweedie and Siobhan McNaught remind us, and Bernard Ransom's account of the Newfoundland Royal Naval Reserve adds delightfully to work already done on the early days of the Canadian navy. Lieutenant Barbara Winters on women, Major William March on the naval college, and Serge Bernier on the first French language unit, HMCS *Ottawa,* all break new ground. David Zimmerman's statistical analysis on the social background of the wartime navy is an interesting start on the subject. A short paper looking to the future by James D. Kiras and a useful indication of policy by Vice Admiral Peter Cairns suggest ways that the navy will meet the needs of Canada in the post-Cold War period.

This very readable book is a valuable reference for historians, military professionals, and other informed readers, not only in Canada, but in any country with a small and developing navy.

W.A.B. Douglas, Ottawa, was the official historian for the Canadian Armed Forces, from 1973 to 1994.

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A tradition of political insight

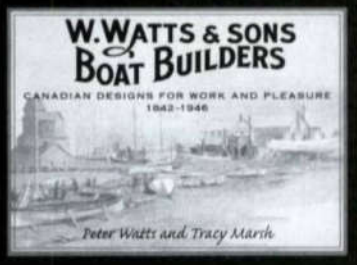
BY WILLIAM NEVILLE

GREAT CANADIAN POLITICAL CARTOONS, 1820 TO 1914.
By Charles and Cynthia Hou.
Moody's Lookout Press, Vancouver, BC, 1997.
240 pp., illus. $39.95 paper.

The editors of this very interesting collection quote John Diefenbaker as saying that if a picture is worth 1,000 words, a well-done cartoon is worth 1,000 pictures. Diefenbaker, who was a cartoonist's delight, knew whereof he spoke.

Political cartoons have a long and honourable lineage. Over time, they have variously provided a form of entertainment, served partisan purposes, offered editorial comment, championed causes, comforted the afflicted, and sought to afflict the comfortable. Typically, the best and most memorable have employed wit, some of it rapier-sharp. Some of the best, in this country and elsewhere, have provided valuable social and political commentary and, thereby, have themselves become a significant part of the historical record.

Though the earliest cartoon here is from 1820, the collection does not really begin to acquire depth until it hits the 1860s and the events leading up to Confederation. After that, the great issues, personalities, and events of successive eras are reflected, not always gently: the Riel of both 1870 and 1885, the Pacific Scandal, the fall and resurrection of Macdonald, reciprocity, the Manitoba schools issue, the rise of Laurier, the Boer War, immigration, reciprocity again, and the events leading up to the outbreak of war in 1914. Canada's relations with the Empire and with the U.S. are recurrent themes, and the different emphases and perspectives offered in French and English language newspapers on these and other issues all speak to what has rightly been called the Canadian Question. One, a French-language cartoon from 1903, proposes a national flag with an uncanny resemblance to the one adopted in 1965; one, from 1887, speaks to a fisheries dispute with the U.S.; a couple (from 1886 and 1909) ridicule the Senate. These remind us that there are a num-



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between the lines

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ber of perennials in our political garden. These cartoons also point to ways in which we have evolved – some issues have disappeared, and with them, a number of unattractive stereotypes, particularly those relating to race and colour.

Along with insights about the evolution of our politics, the book prompts reflection – or raises questions – about evolving styles and tastes, and indeed, about the assumptions that lie behind the cartoonists' art and appeal. The earliest cartoons here tend to be earnest, didactic, and laboured, frequently obscuring a central point under a multitude of secondary points. These leave no *i*'s undotted or *t*'s uncrossed; they are not subtle. Over the years covered here, one senses some changes, though whether later audiences for cartoons were presumed to be more sophisticated or only capable of absorbing a single message is perhaps moot.

One might hypothesize that this evolution, foreshadowed in the early years of the century, has proceeded much further in the century's last years. In our era there is a tendency to expect cartoons to demonstrate not merely humour, but wit and satire – sometimes biting, often subtle, and frequently with minimal text, forcing the reader to summon up many of the ancillary or related points. The earlier cartoons of Macpherson in Toronto or, currently, those of Aislin in Montreal, Dale Cummings in Winnipeg, or Cam Cardow in Calgary provide striking examples. Often the work of these artists is simply stunning.

A further collection, covering the years since 1914, might illustrate this even more clearly. As such it could provide insights not only into the evolution of our politics, but as to the way – thanks to our cartoonists – our manner of seeing and understanding our politics has itself evolved. Whether or not further volumes follow, the Hous have, in this one, a book that is valuable and thought provoking.

William Neville is head of the Department of Political Studies at the University of Manitoba, and writes a regular column on politics for the Winnipeg Free Press.

The myth of glory

BY GAVIN MURPHY

DEATH SO NOBLE
Memory, Meaning, and the First World War
By Jonathan F. Vance.
University of British Columbia Press
Vancouver, BC, 1997.
320 pp., illus. $39.95. hardcover

Amid the death and destruction of the First World War, a glorious and patriotic crusade was played out. That is how the war was essentially portrayed to Canadians, according to Jonathan Vance in *Death So Noble.*

As Vance so eloquently shows in his original and well-researched book, this was the message most Canadians were led to – or wanted to – believe. The loss of 60,000 Canadians was justified as the price to save Western civilization from chaos and militarism and to build a better world.

Canadians from coast to coast answered the call to arms to defend Christianity and Mother Britain. To Canon Frederick George Scott, "it seemed as if Canada herself were steaming across the ocean" when the First Contingent sailed for Europe. But Vance claims the so-called Golden Summer of 1914 before the war was really a time of decadence, materialism, and unrest. Nevertheless, the myth of innocence, youth, and the *belle époque* gallantly snuffed out at the Somme and Passchendaele has persisted.

Those given the task of recording the war often employed creative licence to maintain the myth of noble service. British peer Lord Beaverbrook produced books and commissioned paintings of Canadians at war. He admits his contribution to the three-part study *Canada in Flanders* includes inaccuracies, adding the main objective of volume 2 was to recruit more men for the "Imperial cause."

Vance suggests this myth was developed, nurtured, and expanded through the dedication of war memorials, film, song, and writing to justify the human toll. Canada had to rationalize the death and maiming of tens of thousands of its young men and women in a faraway place. The stakes were high and most embraced the myth. Vance says by accepting traditional concepts of war and sacrifice, many Canadians actually helped to create and perpetuate them.

The war was expected to lay the groundwork for a better Canada. While it did foster a sense of nationhood and what it meant to be Canadian, Vance acknowledges the war did not lead to greater nation building. Mutual respect between English and French Canadians, and societal acceptance of immigrants and native Canadians as full partners in Canada, did not materialize with victory.

Vance's book is profusely illustrated and his range of sources impressive. The selection of vintage photography and other images is generally good, showing representative examples of war memorials and period nostalgia. The author and his father contribute some of their own photography – Vance should have concentrated on the writing. It is also unfortunate that a small font and image size were used. This editorial choice makes each page of what is an otherwise compelling book difficult to enjoy for some, and probably impossible for others.

Death So Noble explains why Canadians considered dying in the Great War a patriotic sacrifice and why we still honour the fallen from that conflict – more so than those from any other. Memorials originally built for casualties from the First World War now honour Canadians lost in later battles. With only a handful of aged veterans from the Great War still alive, it is easy to forget they were once young men fighting for ideals often considered naive by today's standards. Vance helps us to remember Canada's veterans by examining their wartime experiences and providing a better understanding of the cause they selflessly fought for so long ago.

Ottawa lawyer Gavin Murphy is currently reading for a Master of Laws degree in Durham, England.

A new spin on some old notions

From our Canadian point of view, American invasions during the War of 1812 were not simply attacks on British foes, they were expressions of Yankee expansionism – attempts to absorb Upper Canada into the United States. We conveniently forget that General Brock, immediately after the surprise successes of capturing Michilimackinac and Detroit, issued a proclamation that unilaterally "ceded Michigan to the arms of his Britannic Majesty." Like Simcoe before him, Brock was not resigned to the borders agreed upon by British-American treaties. He wanted land to the west and south to be exclusively Indian territory, restricted from white (that is, American) settlement and secured (that is, controlled) by British posts promoting trade. Brock, and his commanding general in the west, Henry Procter, made firm promises that Indian interests in Michigan would be respected and protected. Needless to say, it did not work out that way, as is clearly chronicled in *A Wampum Denied*. Ever since his defeat at the Battle of Moraviantown (and the resulting death of Tecumseh), Procter has received bad press, blamed for the loss and for British failures. This splendid new study puts a very different spin on the whole affair, not completely exonerating Procter, but showing how he was attempting to honour clear assurances made to native allies.

Anyone interested in that time in our history must read an even more significant work, a substantial, scholarly (the notes and bibliography, in 10 point type, run more than 60 pages!), yet totally readable biography, *Tecumseh: A Life*. Its subject is probably the most written about Indian who ever lived – the central figure of hundreds books, both fiction and nonfiction. Indeed, Tecumseh is so famous (or, in the eyes of some, infamous) that it has been difficult to separate the man from the myth.

With his brother the Prophet (renowned for his apocalyptic visions), Tecumseh tried to unite native tribes into a single collective force. Only then would they have the strength to resist the European thrust westward in North America, with the complete disruption and ultimate denial of Indian culture, life, and property that accompanied it.

This vision of an Indian confederation was not new, the religious inspirations were not unique, and the notion of an Indian nation was doomed from the start. Nonetheless, Tecumseh had a profound influence on the course of North American history 200 years ago. In fighting (and dying) with the British and Canadians, Tecumseh was not being loyal to the Crown, nor were his warriors mere pawns in a white man's war. He was fighting his own people's battles for his own people's interests.

Tecumseh: A Life enables us to look at the man with fresh eyes, to understand and appreciate his ambition, his vitality, his personal magnetism, his cold cruelty, and his vision – in short, his passion. British historian John Sugden invested 30 years of his life researching and writing this book. For this he deserves highest honours – with *Tecumseh* we are all richly rewarded.

A very different source for an understanding of American native culture is in the petroglyphs – carvings on rocks – on Quadra Island, British Columbia. Anthropologist Joy Inglis lived among the Kwakiutl people of the island, attempting to understand the rock art and its role in the rituals and ceremonies of an earlier era (most of the petroglyphs were created 300 to 3,000 years ago). She gained insight from native respondents, archaeologists, published sources, and "psychics who make use of some of the shamanic techniques of the carvers." Her slim volume, *Spirit in the Stone*, generously sprinkled with delightful drawings and photographs, presents her conclusions. Those interested in the subject might also want to look at *Reading Rock Art*, published five years ago but still in print, which interprets rock paintings on the Canadian shield.

In *Who Killed Canadian History?* (to be reviewed in an upcoming issue), noted historian Jack Granatstein starts a dolorous discussion on the failures of our schools, universities, and government policies in the field of history. Notice of history's demise, I think, is premature, at least from one perspective. There are no signs of an ebb to the flow of books dealing with very specific aspects of our history. To cite but two examples: if you're interested in music you might look at *The Organ in Manitoba*. Obviously not expected to attract broad readership, it is nonetheless a worthwhile, carefully researched

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reference book. And I never realized the importance of organs in a pre-electric (and pre-electronic) period of social culture.

If you love Montreal or are fascinated by church history, get *St. Patrick's of Montreal.* As its name suggests, the church that is the focus of this book was founded 150 years ago to serve Irish Catholic immigrants in a French Catholic culture. The "creative tensions," as the author calls them, persist.

No, Canadian history is not dead. It's alive, well, and living in your local library or bookstore (as well as in the pages of this magazine, of course). ◆

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By Sandy Antal. Carleton University Press, 1997. 450 pages. $34.95 paper.

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By J.L. Granatstein. Harper Collins, 1998. 156 pages. $22.00 hardcover.

LETTERS

Groves remembered

My husband and I enjoyed the article on Dr. Abraham Groves [April/May 1998]. We were both born and brought up in Fergus and have some recollection of him.

Dr. Groves was driven around Fergus in a chauffeured car (one of only two in the village), often accompanied by his quite vocal parrot–who outlived him.

In the early thirties, my father, Wesley Ham, was reeve of Fergus and chairman of the hospital board. I remember him coming home after a meeting with Dr. Groves about the doctor continuing to operate in spite of his failing eyesight. He reported that Dr. Groves had said to him: "Mr. Ham, I can see as well with my fingers as most can see with their eyes." And that was that.

Mary Raymond
Etobicoke, Ontario

An inequitable view

Allow me to commend you on your outstanding special issue on the Royal Canadian Mounted Police [June/July 1998]. I read every article and enjoyed them all.

That is, with one exception: "Power Serge," by Ian Band. This article, so redolent of today's politically correct attitudes, did not live up to the general level of the publication.

An organization must be judged on the basis of the milieu in which it exists. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were years of exuberant expansion by a Western civilization that was technologically superior to every other culture on earth. It was natural for the members of that civilization to feel that their culture was also superior. Could one be human and not feel that way? But these people, particularly those from northern and western Europe, had another unique attribute. They realized that there was and would be negative impacts on those people whose cultures were being assaulted. They threw out a unique support system in the missions that the churches established to try to first, mitigate the damage, and second, to try to ease the transition into the new society. Despite many failures and misjudgements, this positive response to the circumstances was a credit to them.

On a secular level, the NWMP were affected by the same values. The end of tribal wars (who now remembers the Battle of Belly River between the Cree and the Blackfoot?), slavery, cannibalism, marauding warriors on the West Coast, and the American whisky traders created a kind of haven markedly different from the conditions in the U.S. or Mexico. Sitting Bull recognized this and spent years under the NWMP's protection. It is in this context the NWMP should be judged. In subsequent years, the Force became a tool of its political masters. Their attitudes may have changed the haven into a prison. The police, like the natives, lived under that regime. The implication that these conditions somehow sully the record of the NWMP is unfair and detrimental to our understanding of their part in our history.

A. R. Paton
Victoria, British Columbia

Journal entries clarified

An avid *Beaver* fan, I refer to the entries from Major Walsh's journal [June/July 1998], specifically the "items within brackets inserted for clarity."

Entry for 2 October: "P^te P.R. Neale late Serg^t A Battery Dom^n Artillery to act as 2^n M^r Serg^t [2nd Master Sergeant]. ..."

I believe that if you examine the original journal you may find that the '2' is in fact a script capital letter 'Q', which very much resembles the numeral, and that the superscript 'n' is in

fact an 'r' or (less likely) an 'm'. This would make Pte. Neale appointed quartermaster-sergeant, a non-commissioned officer in charge of stores and equipment. I do not believe that Canada has had master sergeants of any type in Canadian military or police service, though master sergeants do exist south of the border.

Entry for 3 October: "The C.O. [Commissioned Officer] requests..."

In usual use, C.O., then as now, means "commanding officer." Referring to oneself as "The Commissioned Officer," even if the only one, was not and is not Canadian military practice.

Laying that aside, I enjoyed the opportunity to read Major Walsh's journal. Reading those lines – and between them – shows that no matter how modern we seem, *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose!*

Craig Adams (Major, Ret'd)
London, Ontario

Mistaken identity

Having had the regimental catechism drummed into my head as a young subaltern – "Never pass a fault" – I found a photograph incorrectly captioned on page 37 in the article entitled "The Invasion of the Yukon" [June/July 1998]. It reads: "Inspector Cortlandt Starnes, seated at the left, with a group of his men at Dawson, 1900." In fact, four of the men in the picture are clearly army officers of the Yukon Field Force, three of whom are members of my regiment, The Royal Canadian Regiment (RCR). The distinct RCR beaver collar dogs, the army frock jackets, and the eight-pointed stars on the wedge caps are quite visible. As there was only one RCR major in Dawson in 1900, the gentleman seated on Inspector Starnes's immediate left is none other than Maj. T.D.R. Hemming, the Yukon Field Force commander. The other two RCR officers are, by process of elimination, Capt. P.E. Thacker and Lieut. A. McLean.

By June 25, 1900, these remaining officers of the Yukon Field Force were ordered withdrawn by the Canadian government and sent back to their home stations. The fact that some 216 army personnel were withdrawn, weakening the NWMP contingent significantly, doesn't seem to get a mention in Mr. Williams's assessment of factors that gave rise to an environment in which an organization the likes of "The Order of the Midnight Sun" could even harbour any illusions that they might be able to seize the Yukon by invasion. I suggest to you that the army's absence in 1901 was a very significant factor in the whisky dreams of the Midnight Sun brethren. 'Nuff said.

Lieutenant-Colonel Ian McCulloch
Gloucester, Ontario

Review statement questioned

I have read with interest the review of my book *A Double Duty* in *The Beaver* [June/July 1998, p. 41]. I note that toward the end of the review, in reference to my writing that Commissioner French had placed Inspector Richer under arrest, Superintendent Religa says that through "his own research" he "learned that French had not placed Richer under arrest, but had only suspended him."

Commissioner French would be surprised at this revelation, because he wrote in his diary on July 9, 1874, that "When about to move off I had to place Inspector R— in arrest for using insubordinate language" (Diary of Commissioner G.A. French, published as Annex "A" to the Report of the Commissioner of the North-West Mounted Police 1874, p. 34). The official historian, John Peter Turner, in *The North-West Mounted Police*, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1950, Vol. 1, p. 130) states that "Inspector Richer, who had received his commission upon the recommendation of men of high standing was put under arrest for gross insubordination." A number of members who were present in 1874 also reported that Richer was put under arrest. Sub-Constable Jean D'Artigue wrote that "the Commissioner was a well-disciplined and experienced officer and knowing well that if this difficulty remained unpunished, he would soon face revolts of a more serious character, he put Inspector Richer under arrest" (D'Artigue, Jean, *Six Years in the Canadian North-West*, Toronto: Hunter, Rose, 1882, p. 41). Sub-Constable Frederick A. Bagley noted in his diary for July 9, 1874, "Inspector Richer in arrest for insubordination" (Glenbow Archives, M 44, Diary of Regimental No. 247, Trumpeter Fred A. Bagley, p. 10). Sub-Constable William Parker also described it as an arrest (Dempsey, Hugh A., *William Parker: Mounted Policeman*, Calgary: Glenbow-Alberta Institute, 1973, p. 9).

The assertion by a senior officer such as Superintendent Religa that this information is incorrect casts doubt on many primary sources which have been used for some years by historians interested in the North-West Mounted Police. If entries in Commissioner French's diary and the other eyewitness accounts cited above are, in fact, inaccurate, this comes as a surprise. Superintendent Religa would do us all a service if he would provide a citation for his proof that Commissioner George French did not place Inspector Richer under arrest on July 9, 1874.

Jim Wallace
Winnipeg

Sup't Religa responds: Mr. Wallace does not understand the point that I was making in the review. It was not whether Richer was arrested or suspended. It was what happened to Richer after the incident. Was he convicted? What was the sentence? I went to National Archives [*ed. note: this fact had been edited from the original text*] and reviewed Inspector Richer's service file. I found that Commissioner French had only suspended Inspector Richer who then resigned his commission in the NWMP. I only cited this story as an example. There were others in the book that left me wondering what happened next. Notwithstanding my comments, I found the book interesting and well worth reading.

And the winners are ...

The Canadian Authors Association recently announced its 1998 winners in 10 categories. Dorothy Harley Eber received the CAA Lela Common Award, which recognizes "excellence in the writing of Canadian history," for her book *Images of Justice* (McGill Queens University Press, 1997).

The CAA Birks Family Foundation Award for biography was awarded to Charlotte Gray, for *Mrs. King: The Life and Times of Isabelle MacKenzie King* (Penguin Books Canada, 1997).

A review of Ms. Eber's book appeared in the June/July 1998 issue of *The Beaver* (p. 45); of Ms. Gray's, in February/March 1998 (p. 46).

The B.C. Historical Foundation has awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Historical Writing to Richard Somerset Mackie for his book, *Trading Beyond the Mountains* (UBC Press, 1997).

❁ ❁ ❁

Barker honoured

An official portrait of Canada's most decorated airman was unveiled at the Canadian Forces Base in Winnipeg this spring. Painted by artist Sergeant Patrick McNorgan, the portrait commemorates William Barker. Barker, who shot down 50 enemy aircraft during the First World War, received the Victoria Cross and nine other decorations for courage in combat. The flying ace fell into obscurity following his death in 1930, but a 1997 biography, *Barker VC* by Wayne Ralph (Doubleday) has created a renewed awareness of him.

❁ ❁ ❁

Gone but not forgotten

People in New Brunswick have been tallying up damage caused by the ravages of water and ice last winter. Among the losses is a covered bridge at Welsford. The provincial government has a policy to maintain early, covered bridges, but not to replace or replicate them. During the past 35 years, New Brunswick has lost 112 of the plank-walled and shingle-roofed structures; only 66 remain.

❁ ❁ ❁

Shoemaker finds historical niche

Robert Land no longer makes his living in a modern shopping mall; he has moved to the battlefields of the nineteenth century. Land, profiled in a recent article in the Toronto *Star,* is a cobbler from Guelph, Ontario, who now specializes in creating replicas of historical footwear. He and other talented craftsmen are responding to the demand from history buffs involved in the growing phenomenon of historical reenactments – Canadians like to restage the War of 1812 and the Fenian raids; Americans and Europeans are fascinated with Civil War battles.

Land, who has himself taken part in reenactments, started making shoes in his spare time for friends. He made the jump to a full-time business in 1993 and markets his shoes by catalogue and through displays at the events. Americans account for 98 percent of his sales, with the Fredricksburg shoe, an American Civil War model, his best-seller.

❁ ❁ ❁

Rare letter found

A remarkable letter from escaped slave Caroline Quarrells has recently been unearthed by a researcher in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Lance Herdegen, director of the Institute for Civil War Studies at Carroll College in Waukesha, discovered the letter among a collection of Civil War documents brought to the Institute by a local family. In an article in the *Milwaukee Sentinel,* Herdegen commented, "It was against the law before the Civil War to teach slaves to read and write. So it's extremely rare to come across that kind of material," which provides a first-person account of a former slave's escape to Canada via the Underground Railroad.

The letter, dated April 28, 1880, was written by Miss Quarrells to Lyman Goodnow, Wisconsin's leading abolitionist, who helped her flee when she was just 16. In it Miss Quarrells recounts the events of her escape from St. Louis in 1842 and the subsequent 38 years in Sandwich, Ontario, where she married and had six children.

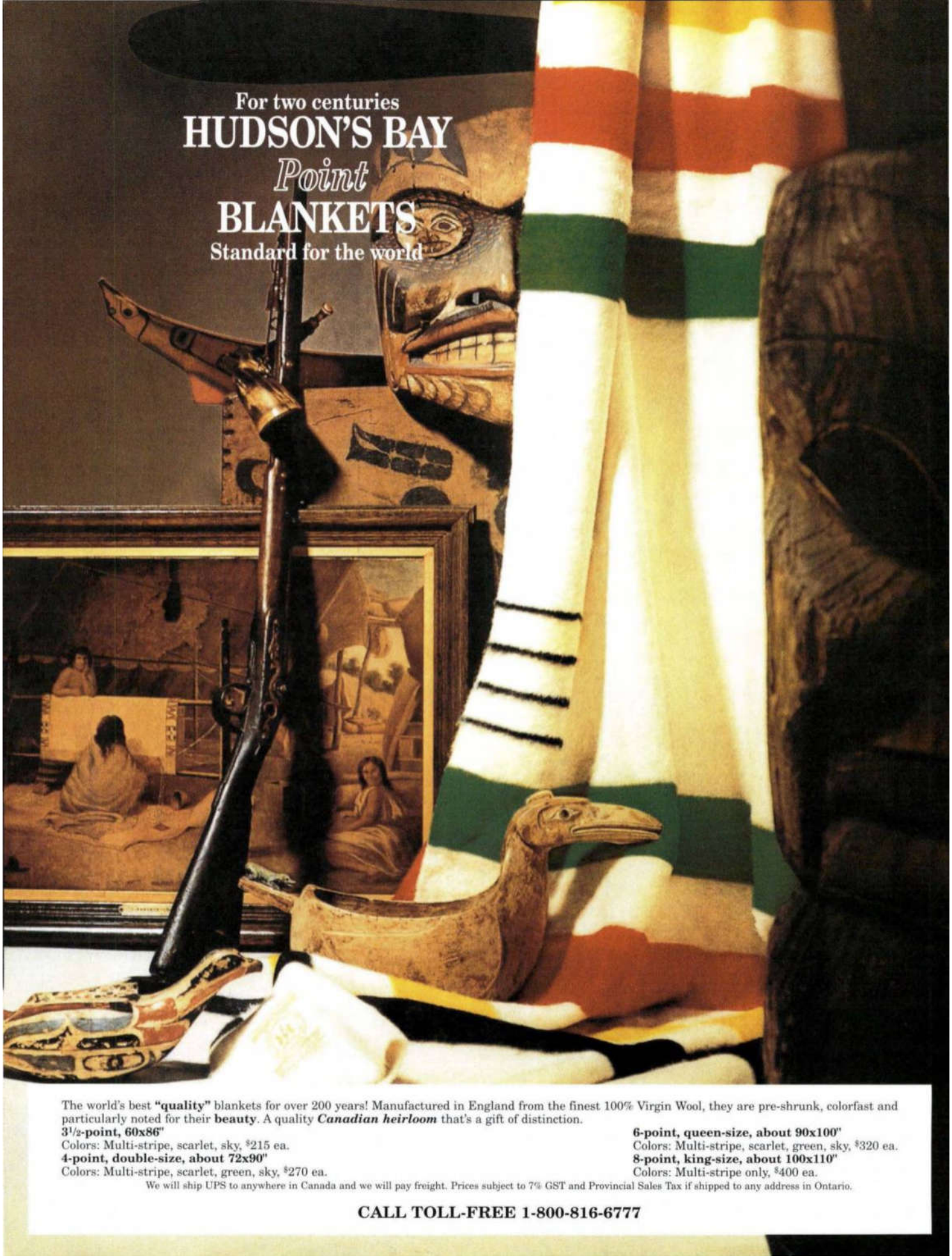
❁ ❁ ❁

Volunteers fight ocean force

On April 1, 1873, the SS *Atlantic* ran aground off the Nova Scotia coast. The sea would claim 560 of the steamship's 933 passengers; 277 would be buried in a mass seaside grave in Terence Bay, Nova Scotia.

But now, 125 years after the calamitous event, the same ocean threatens to claim the remains of the victims. Over 14 metres of the coast have been eroded over the years, and the bones of many buried there have been exposed.

A recent *Globe and Mail* article reports that Anglican minister Rev. Glenn Eason and local volunteers have been involved in reburying the bones as provincial authorities review how best to save the site. The SS *Atlantic* Memorial Fund has been established by St. Paul's Anglican Church in Terence Bay to raise money for the project. It is estimated that $50,000 will be required to build a rock wall to shore up the grave, which Rev. Eason hopes will be designated a historic site in memory of those who drowned. The rescue effort is in a race against time, however, as the waves continue to wear away the ground and volunteers scramble to save what they can.



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4-point, double-size, about 72x90"
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6-point, queen-size, about 90x100"
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MUSEUM PROFILE

Point-à-Callière classified as a National Historic Site

On May 17, 1998, **Point-à-Callière Museum** marked its sixth birthday. On that day, the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board affixed a plaque on the Éperon Building to recognize the national significance of the historic site on which the Museum stands. In addition to marking Montreal's birthplace, the plaque pays tribute to Place Royal's role as a traditional meeting place. Point-à-Callière is located between Place d'Youville and la Commune and Calliere streets, but it originally covered a much larger area. Archaeological excavations conducted in 1989 have made it possible to reconstruct nearly 350 years of occupation.

STEPHAN POULIN

It was on this site that Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve founded Montreal in 1642. The French built Fort Ville-Marie shortly after their arrival. Around 1688, the third governor of Montreal, Louis-Hector de Callière, erected his residence, known as the "chateau," on the site.

The plaque represents official recognition of the heritage value of the site, and is one way of educating the public about the richness of our cultural heritage and the importance of conserving it for future generations.

Point-à-Callière
Musée d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montreal
350, place Royal, Vieux-Montréal, Quebec H2Y 3Y5
Tel. (514) 872-9150

MUSEUM DISCOUNTS

Membership in Canada's National History Society provides reduced admission to the following leading Canadian museums:

- Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria
- Vancouver Museum
- Vancouver Maritime Museum
- Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Banff, Alberta
- Glenbow Museum, Calgary
- Provincial Museum of Alberta, Edmonton
- Saskatchewan Western Development Museum, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Yorkton
- Dalnavert Museum, Winnipeg
- Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, Winnipeg
- Western Canada Aviation Museum, Winnipeg
- McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal
- Pointe à Callière, Musée d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montréal
- Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, QC
- New Brunswick Museum, Saint John
- Yarmouth County Museum, Yarmouth, NS

A discount of at least 10 percent on regular admission will be given upon presentation of your membership card. Some restrictions may apply. All subscribers to *The Beaver* are automatically members of the Society.

THE SOCIETY

Finalists Chosen

The 12 finalists for the 1998 Governor General's Award for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History have been selected from among 94 entries. They are:

Gloria Johnson, Sydney, NS
Cindy Hanson, Brandon, MB
Douglas Gosse, St. John's, NF
Luc Tousignant, Nicole Gobeil, and Vincent Ruel, Sherbrooke, QC
Gina McMurchy-Barber and Kristin Cassie, Surrey, BC
Michael J. Taylor, Scarborough, ON
Ken Marland, Saskatoon, SK
Ena Lalonde, Gloucester, ON
David McAdam, Thornhill, ON
Tom Morton, Vancouver, BC
Judi Gelowitz, Kamloops, BC

As they have in previous years, the finalists represent a good cross section, in terms of grade level and teaching experience. For the first time, however, there are finalists from Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia.

Finalists receive an all-expense-paid trip for two to Ottawa to attend the award banquet and ceremony on November 21, 1998. They also receive a certificate and a cheque for $500. The recipient of the award, selected from among the finalists, will receive a cash prize of $5000 and a computer for his or her school.

The award ceremony will again take place at Rideau Hall under the auspices of His Excellency, the Right Honourable Roméo LeBlanc, Governor General of Canada. His Excellency will not only present the certificates but will announce the recipient of the 1998 award.

Canada's National History Society established the Governor General's Award three years ago to recognize the "best history teachers in the country." The program has been supported since its inception by the Hudson's Bay History Foundation, Bell Canada, Investors Group, The National Capital Commission, and more recently, by The Molson Foundation, The T.R. Meighen Foundation, and Tricon Restaurants International.

You are invited to visit the Society's website at:
<http://www.cyberspc.mb.ca/~otmw/cnhs/cnhs.html>

Canada's National History Society
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The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Ottawa • Brian Grose, Toronto • A. Rolph Huband, Oakville • Francine Lelièvre, Montreal
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Christopher Moore

Living History, History Dying

In recent months, a film about war, an argument about the allegedly dying interest in Canadian history, and the death of a notable historian all seemed to comment on each other.

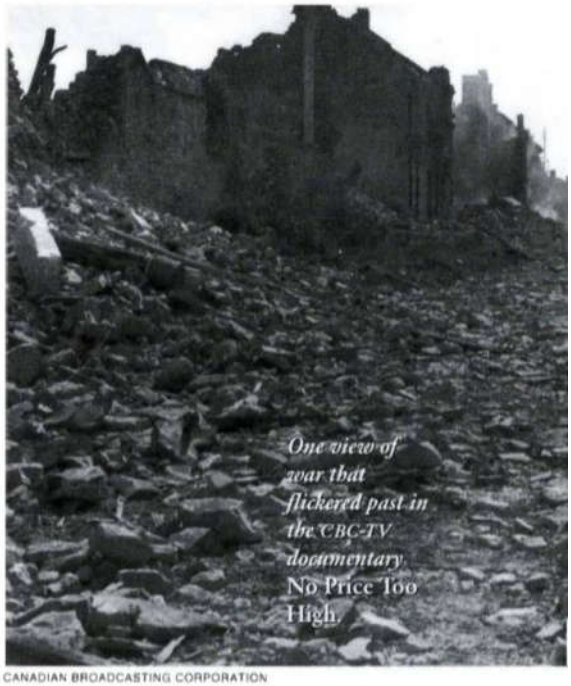
One might hope that, one day, the unceasing flood of books and films about the Canadian experience in war will finally kill off the too-common suggestion that Canadians have no interest in their military history–or, indeed, their history altogether. Last May and June, CBC Television presented *Remembering Canada at War,* a lavish display of some of the dramas and documentaries that have preserved the visual record of World War II.

Its centrepiece, the six-part Sunday-night documentary series *No Price Too High,* had itself been part of that debate about remembering or forgetting. Military historians and veterans had assailed the CBC for not showing *No Price Too High* earlier, for it was widely considered a "reply" to another war documentary, 1992's *The Valour and the Horror.* Veterans and historians who had deeply disliked that film had been prominent in raising funds for and helping to make *No Price Too High.* Some suggested the CBC's failure to show it sooner was a conspiracy against them–or against history itself.

As an admirer of *The Valour and the Horror,* I greatly approved of a "reply" to it. History should be controversial, and the production of diverse opinions is always better than attempts to censor or suppress unwelcome opinions. I thought the depths plumbed by many of the historians' attacks on *The Valour and the Horror* had greatly sullied the reputation of the whole historical community. Better, I thought, that they put their own version on view, and let us make up our own minds.

But when I first saw *No Price Too High* in its companion book version, I flinched from it. That title, set against a close-up photo of a dead young soldier, brought too vividly to mind Siegfried Sassoon's image of "red faced majors at the base/Who speed glum heroes up the line to death," with complacent epitaphs about the sweetness of dying for one's country. We whose lives are not on the line should not be quick to declare the deaths of others acceptable.

In fact, film and book are far better than their title had seemed to threaten. The series is a kind of filmed survey course in Canada's war. Even in six hours, much has to flicker by very fast. So a couple of minutes on women at war gives way to a brief scene of the prime minister speechmaking, and that to a quick survey of the Air Training program, and so on. But the film skillfully explores the rich archive of film that Canadians created between 1939 and 1945, and sets it off effectively against carefully researched first-person statements as well as useful brief orientations from the film's historian, Professor Terry Copp.



One view of war that flickered past in the CBC-TV documentary No Price Too High.

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

The panic about the "death" of history often seems mostly to cover a fear that history is actually becoming too lively.

Watching, I concluded that *No Price Too High* and *The Valour and the Horror* speak to two completely different impulses provoked by the history of war. *No Price Too High* expresses the laudable impulse to stiffen one's back, square one's shoulders, and proudly salute the great things Canadians did in terrible times. *The Valour and The Horror* draws on a different impulse altogether, the one that wakes you up in the middle of the night, sweating and shaking at the irredeemable, unjustifiable, insane depravity of war. In the end, one impulse requires the other. *No Price Too High* is a documentary about Canadian greatness; *The Valour and The Horror* is a great documentary. I'm glad we have both.

The odd notion that Canadian military history has been neglected has somehow fed into the equally odd notion that Canadian history is dying. The panic, much promoted recently, about the "death" of history often seems mostly to cover a fear that history is actually becoming too lively. For isn't it obvious that interest in Canadian history is growing and thriving? History seems to be what all our leading novelists write about. Filmmakers and journalists and musicians keep coming around to historical themes, and history abounds on the nonfiction bestseller lists. Even politicians seem determined to jump into historical debates with official pronouncement–about the status of Louis Riel or even

Mackenzie King's role in the Quebec Conference of 1943. The flourishing of this magazine, *The Beaver,* would seem conclusive proof that there is indeed a substantial community of adults in Canada with a genuine, mature interest in things historical.

But writers and filmmakers and politicians and citizens follow their own convictions and do not always defer to history's self-appointed gatekeepers. Not much subject to professorial control, they are more likely to debunk than salute anything that seems to be "official" history. They are likely to have their own interests and enthusiasms. They may even produce *The Valour and The Horror.*

History in the schools, however, seems more amenable to control by the official guardians of history. So the surveys that suggest adult Canadians know little history are somehow turned into arguments that we need to force more history upon the captive audience of youth, often with the claim that enough history teaching in the schools will somehow produce national salvation.

It is hard to criticize any effort to improve our schools and support our teachers. But the assumption sometimes seems to be that if we authorize our professors and teachers to fill young people up with enough history, then we need not worry about its status among adults–as if teaching history is all there is to practising history. Even Canada's National History Society, the publisher of this magazine, seems to have been swept up in this crusade. From its recent announcements, the Society seems increasingly to emphasize saving the education system–a billion-dollar institution where any private investment seems likely to vanish without trace–over adding value to its unique magazine.

In the midst of rumours about dying history, Jean Hamelin, a distinguished historian of Quebec and a father of the modern profession of history in Canada, died in May. He is said to have produced 45 books, but the ones best known to English Canadians may be the volumes of *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography,* of which he had been coeditor for about 20 years. (For anyone who keeps an archive of *Beaver* back issues, I wrote about the wonders of the DCB back in August/September 1992, when Volume 13 was in preparation.)

When Jean Hamelin died, DCB 14 was just about to appear. The subjects of its 1100 pages will be the lives of some 600 Canadians who died in the years 1911–20, from Charles Tupper, last of the Confederation makers, to a sampling of the young Canadian dead of the First World War. I have my order in.

Hamelin died at 66, but another great historian of Quebec and past editor of the DCB still thrives: Marcel Trudel. A few years ago, in his autobiography, *Memoires d'un autre siecle* (Memoirs of another century), Trudel declared that as someone who was born in 1917 in a large, poor family in a rural and backward part of Quebec dominated by traditional values and clerical power, he was really a child of the eighteenth century. By offering dispassionate analysis instead of sentimental pieties, Trudel the historian (and Hamelin his younger colleague) made their contribution to freeing Quebec from the long eighteenth century.

This past winter, I was slowly working my way through the latest volume of Trudel's vast, meticulously detailed history of New France. In five fat volumes so far, it has reached only the 1670s. Someone once called Trudel the man who is on a first-name basis with everyone who lived in the seventeenth century. Indeed he goes beyond that. At one point in the recent volume, he is checking the accuracy of the first census of New France, ordered by Intendant Jean Talon in 1666. To establish just when the census takers reached one community, Trudel notes the date of baptism of one newborn child. The baptism should have closely followed the birth, Trudel observes in passing, for the family lived next door to the church. He records, in other words, not only everyone's name and the birthdays of all their children, but even which side of the street they lived on.

It all seems to me an incompletable, unrepeatable, and somehow quite wholly magnificent historical project. By any official count, Trudel turned 80 last year. But if what he says about being born in the eighteenth century is true, he has actually lived through close to 300 years. Which seems as good a refutation as any of the mischievous delusion that our history is dead or dying. I hope he lives forever. ◆

Beaver Book Club

Limited Quantities Still Available!

YANKEE GO HOME? CANADIANS AND ANTI-AMERICANISM
by J.L. Granatstein
Publisher's List Price $20.
Club Price **$14.** (paper)

THE DISCOVERY OF INSULIN
by Michael Bliss
Publisher's List Price $19.99
Club Price **$12.** (paper)

NATIONAL PARKS OF CANADA
by Kevin McNamee
with a foreword by David Suzuki
Publisher's List Price $45.
Club Price **$26.** (cloth)

SCRUM WARS: The Prime Ministers and the Media
by Allan Levine
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KLONDIKE
by Pierre Berton
Publisher's List Price $21.
Club Price **$15.** (paper)

Order today!
See the Beaver Book Club ad on the inside front cover

Pictures from Canadian Attics

The General Store John James Jelly (1839–1906), in apron at left, poses in front of his general store in Harrietsville, Ontario. In the middle is Robert Facey (1841–1897), a local cheesemaker who built the Harrietsville Cheese Factory in 1866–67. Young Will Jelly (1865–1834), J.J.'s eldest son, is at right.

The photo, taken around 1880, shows a typical country store, replete with wares that any family might need, from a washboard or skillet to a lantern or cabbage – not to mention a freshly plucked chicken for the pot.

J.J.'s great-grandson, Mr. Earle R. Jelly of Souris, Manitoba, submitted this photo to *The Beaver.*

Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in our country's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied at your local photo shop (please don't send priceless originals) and send it to: *The Beaver,* Pictures from Canadian Attics; #478–167 Lombard Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0T6. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your copy returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

HISTORY™
TELEVISION

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

HISTORY ON FILM

Wednesday - Saturday nights at 9 ET/PT

Four nights a week, veteran journalist Ann Medina hosts History Television's presentation of high-quality, historically-based feature films. Upcoming highlights include *Night of the Generals, Von Ryan's Express, The Blue Max, The Mission, Mary, Queen of Scots and The Tuskegee Airmen.*

DIEPPE SPECIAL

August 17, 19, 20 at 9 ET/9PT

History Television commemorates the heroes of Dieppe by presenting a thoughtful documentary (Aug. 17) and a mini-series (Aug. 19-20) on Dieppe.

HISTORY PRESENTS

Monday nights at 9 ET/PT

History Presents is the weekly showcase for high quality, award-winning documentaries from around the world. Programs coincide with significant dates and anniversaries. Upcoming highlights include:

Guns of August *(August 3)* - Based on the Pulitzer Prize winning book by Barbara Tuchman, *Guns of August* is the compelling story of how a handful of all-powerful leaders catapulted the world into WWI.

The Windsors *(August 24 and 31)* - An intimate portrait of 75 years of this powerful and wealthy dynasty.

El Che *(September 7)* - The life of Che Guevara, one of the most charismatic and enigmatic icons of revolution.

NEW PROGRAMS FOR SUMMER '98

DESTINATION: HISTORY

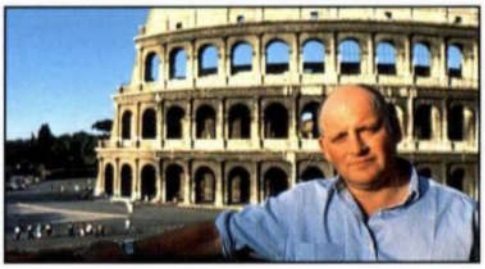
Weeknights at 8 ET/5 PT

A daily trip around the world for armchair time travelers. Every weeknight, History Television features fascinating and entertaining programs that let you escape to the past. Programs include:

• **Mansion: Great Houses of Europe**, a discovery of splendid gardens and interiors full of fine art and decorations that were the setting for real-life stories of romance and intrigue;

• **Witness to Yesterday**, featuring lively, probing and dramatic dialogues between host Patrick Watson and the world's most exciting historical figures, brought to life by well-known Canadian and international stars.

• **Testament**, written and produced by John Romer, a documentary series about the stories and origins of the Bible.



• Other series will include: **Great Wonders of the World, Ancient Civilizations** and **Pacific Century**.

ADVENTURE SUNDAYS

Sunday nights starting at 7 ET/6 PT

Sunday nights are filled with swashbuckling adventures including:

Pirate Tales - Roger Daltrey hosts a weekly exploration of the golden era of this cut-throat trade.

Sharpe - One of History Television's most popular series. Follow the swashbuckling exploits of Major Richard Sharpe in 19th century Spain.

The Untouchables - Classic '60s series starring Robert Stack as crime fighter Elliot Ness.

HISTORY™ TELEVISION

IT'S ABOUT TIME.™

SUMMER 1998 SCHEDULE

EASTERN	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
8:00AM	SKETCHES OF OUR TOWN					PACIFIC CENTURY	ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS
8:30AM	THE CAMPBELLS						
9:00AM	FRONT PAGE CHALLENGE					ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS	TESTAMENT
9:30AM	GREAT CRIMES AND TRIALS OF THE 20TH CENTURY						
10:00AM	DRAMA STRIP (WISH ME LUCK, COLDITZ AND SECRET ARMY)					HISTORY PRESENTS	GREAT MANSIONS OF EUROPE
10:30AM							GREAT WONDERS
11:00AM	COMBAT						WORLD AT WAR
11:30AM							
12:00PM	HISTORY PRESENTS	THE FIFTIES	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	WORLD AT WAR	CENTURY OF WARFARE
12:30PM							
1:00PM		POP!				CENTURY OF WARFARE	THE FIFTIES
1:30PM							
2:00PM	I, CLAUDIUS		GREAT MYTHS	GREAT MYTHS		PACIFIC CENTURY	I, CLAUDIUS
2:30PM							
3:00PM	ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS	HISTORYLANDS	TESTAMENT	GREAT MANSIONS OF EUROPE	PACIFIC CENTURY	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM
3:30PM		WITNESS TO YESTERDAY		GREAT WONDERS			
4:00PM	DRAMA STRIP (WISH ME LUCK, COLDITZ AND SECRET ARMY)						
4:30PM							
5:00PM	COMBAT					GREAT MYTHS	GREAT MYTHS
5:30PM							
6:00PM	SKETCHES OF OUR TOWN					WITNESS TO YESTERDAY	HISTORYLANDS
6:30PM	THE CAMPBELLS					HISTORYLANDS	WITNESS TO YESTERDAY
7:00PM	FRONT PAGE CHALLENGE					GREAT MANSIONS OF EUROPE	THE UNTOUCHABLES
7:30PM	GREAT CRIMES AND TRIALS OF THE 20TH CENTURY					GREAT WONDERS	
8:00PM	ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS	HISTORYLANDS	TESTAMENT	GREAT MANSIONS OF EUROPE	PACIFIC CENTURY	THE FIFTIES	IN SEARCH OF THE TROJAN WAR
8:30PM		WITNESS TO YESTERDAY		GREAT WONDERS			
9:00PM	HISTORY PRESENTS	THE FIFTIES	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	SHARPE
9:30PM							
10:00PM		POP!					
10:30PM							
11:00PM	I, CLAUDIUS		GREAT MYTHS	GREAT MYTHS			IN SEARCH OF THE TROJAN WAR
11:30PM							
12:00AM	HISTORY PRESENTS	THE FIFTIES	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	SHARPE
12:30AM							
1:00AM		POP!					
1:30AM							
2:00AM	I, CLAUDIUS		GREAT MYTHS	GREAT MYTHS			THE UNTOUCHABLES
2:30AM							
3:00AM	COMBAT					TESTAMENT	SHARPE
3:30AM							
4:00AM	ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS	HISTORYLANDS	TESTAMENT	GREAT MANSIONS OF EUROPE	PACIFIC CENTURY	HISTORYLANDS	
4:30AM		WITNESS TO YESTERDAY		GREAT WONDERS		WITNESS TO YESTERDAY	
5:00AM	SKETCHES OF OUR TOWN					HISTORY ON FILM	IN SEARCH OF THE TROJAN WAR
5:30AM	THE CAMPBELLS						
6:00AM	FRONT PAGE CHALLENGE						THE FIFTIES
6:30AM	GREAT CRIMES AND TRIALS OF THE 20TH CENTURY						
7:00AM	DRAMA STRIP (WISH ME LUCK, COLDITZ, AND SECRET ARMY)						THE UNTOUCHABLES
7:30AM							

Program changes may occur.

DESTINATION: HISTORY

ADVENTURE SUNDAYS